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FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE TO COOK

bonus section: 15 favorite
summer side dishes

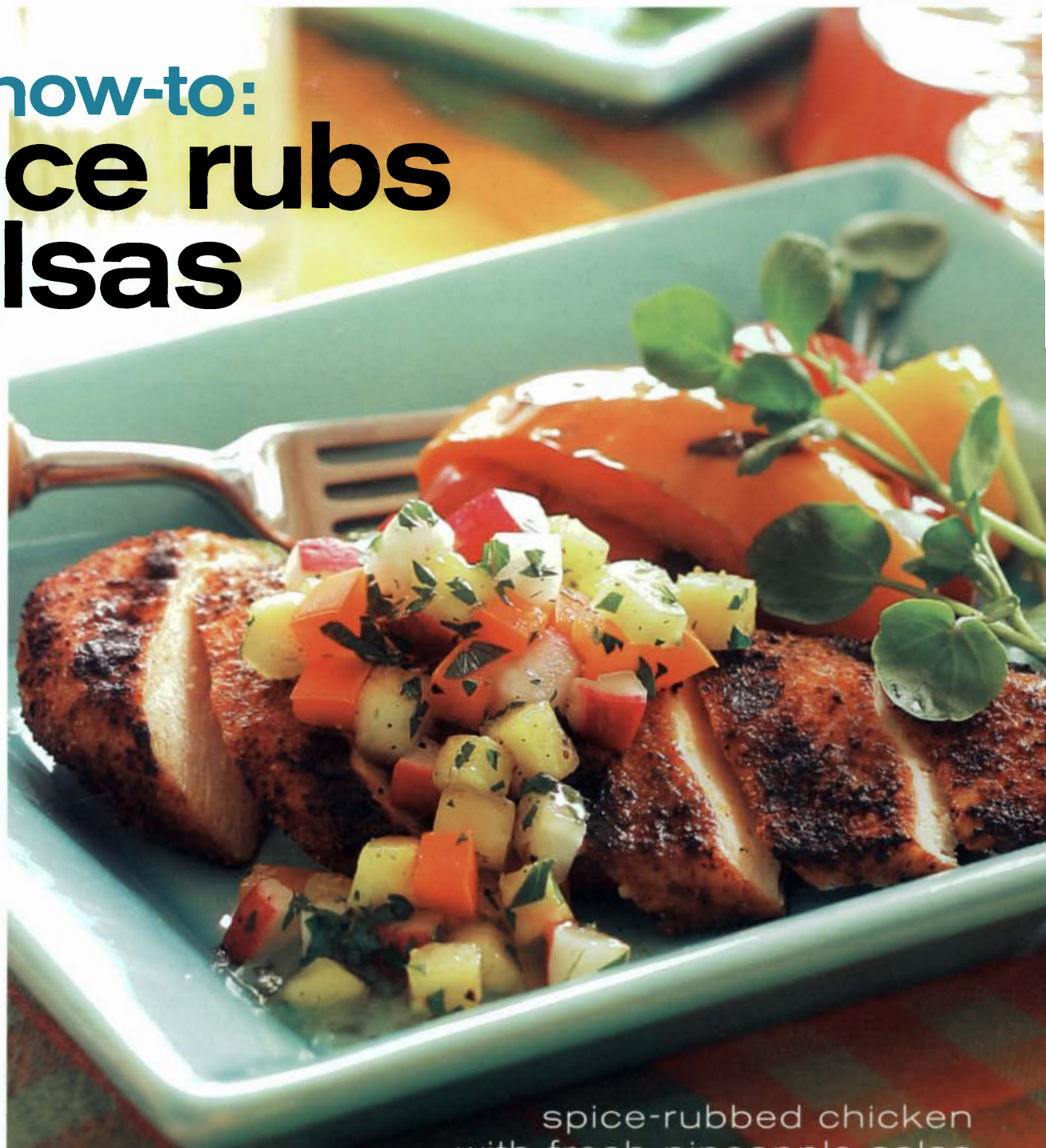
grilling how-to: **spice rubs & salsas**

**shortcuts
to juicy
chicken**

**do-ahead
berry tarts**

**seven fresh
summer
salads**

quesadillas



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JULY 2006 NO. 79

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spice-rubbed chicken
with fresh pineapple salsa

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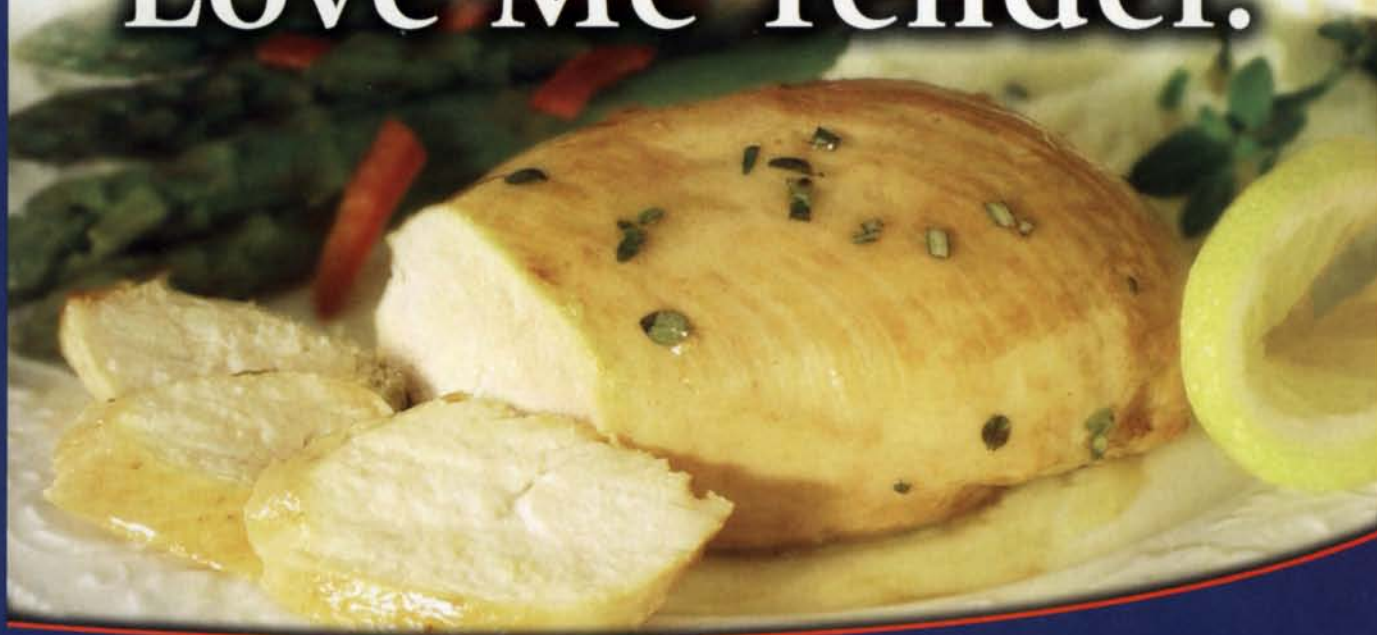
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RECIPE FOLDOUTS

10e Summer Side Dishes

15 favorite recipes



90c Quick & Delicious

fresh ideas for dinner



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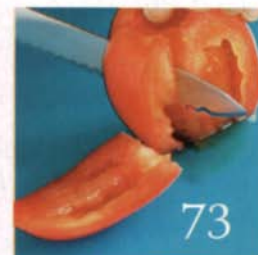
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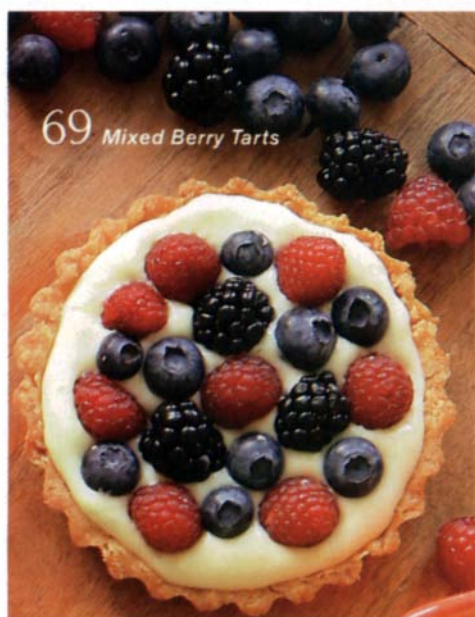


78

- ◆ **QUICK**
Under 45 minutes
- ◆ **MAKE AHEAD**
Can be completely prepared ahead but may need reheating and a garnish to serve
- ◆ **MOSTLY MAKE AHEAD**
Can be partially prepared ahead but will need a few finishing touches before serving
- ◆ **VEGETARIAN**
May contain eggs and dairy ingredients



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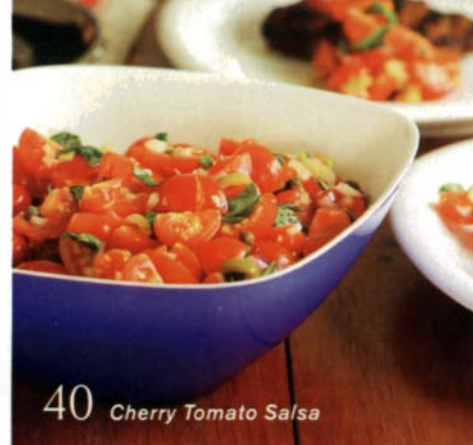
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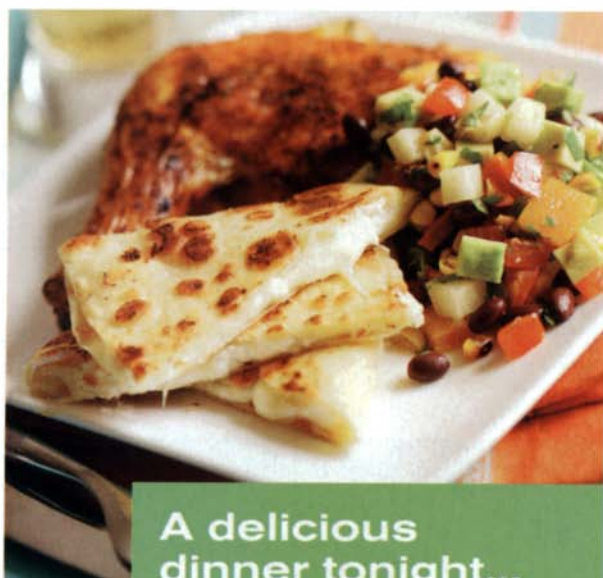


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Easing into Summer

A two-meal menu for overnight guests



A delicious dinner tonight...

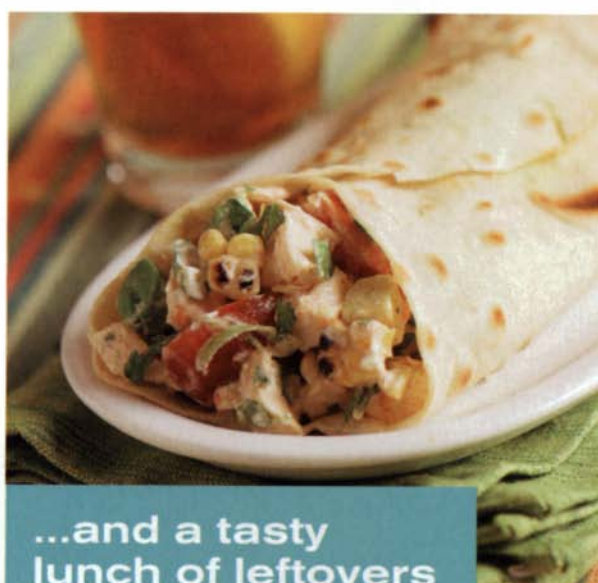
Throw an extra chicken on the grill to guarantee you'll have leftovers for lunch tomorrow. And if you're going to make your own tortillas, make a double batch.

Three-Cheese Quesadillas, p. 62
(optional: Fresh Flour Tortillas, p. 74)

Chopped Mexican Salad with Roasted Peppers, Corn, Tomatoes & Avocado, p. 57

Beer-Brined Butterflied Chicken, p. 55

Bumbleberry Pie, p. 70



...and a tasty lunch of leftovers tomorrow

The chicken salad wraps use up leftover chicken and tortillas from last night. And the shortbread fingers come from yesterday's leftover pie dough.

Tex-Mex Chicken Salad wraps, p. 76
(use Fresh Flour Tortillas, p. 74, or store-bought) served with a simple green salad

Vanilla ice cream with Easiest Berry Sauce, p. 68, and **Shortbread Fingers**, p. 76

Whether we're throwing together a quick supper or making something special for out-of-town guests, it always feels less complicated in summer. And no wonder—long, leisurely days and an abundance of in-season produce really do make a cook's life easier. So relax, we have all the ideas you need to make the most of this unfussy season. Just be sure to check the recipe yields; you may need to double or halve recipes to suit your needs.

Five breezy suppers

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Grilled Bread Salad with Tomatoes & Spicy Greens, p. 10e</p> <p>Grilled Chicken Breasts with Green Olive Pesto, p. 90c</p> | <p>Grilled Corn & Tomato "Salad" with Basil Oil, p. 51</p> <p>Mushroom & Fontina Quesadillas, p. 62</p> | <p>Baked Salmon with Citrus Vinaigrette, p. 90c</p> <p>Deconstructed Pesto Pasta, p. 49</p> | <p>Three-Cheese Quesadillas with Garlic Butter, p. 62</p> <p>Spice-Rubbed Grilled Pork, Chicken, or Turkey, p. 39, with Fennel-Paprika Rub & Cherry Tomato Salsa, p. 40</p> | <p>Chopped Greek Salad with Garlic Croutons, p. 58</p> <p>Fresh berries with whipped cream and Lemon Curd, p. 69</p> |

Three meals for casual get togethers

An almost-impromptu party

If you make the tart shells, lemon curd, and basil oil a couple of days in advance, it will be really easy to have friends over for dinner.

Mozzarella & Basil Stuffed Cherry Tomatoes, p. 48

Seared Rib-Eye Steaks with Edamame & Garlic, p. 90c

Grilled bread with Basil Oil, p. 51

Mixed Berry Tarts with a Lemony Filling, p. 69

A simple picnic

The secret to a picnic-friendly sandwich is toasted bread—it rarely gets soggy, even if you make your sandwiches a couple of hours ahead.

Creamy Potato Salad with Radishes, Lemon & Dill, p. 10e

Pancetta, Arugula, Tomato & Avocado Sandwich with Aioli, p. 90c

Red Raspberry Turnovers, p. 71

A quick week-night cookout

Whip up the brownies as soon as you get home from work so they'll be cool enough to eat when you're ready for dessert.

Grilled Potato, Corn & Red Onion Salad, p. 10e

Grilled tuna steaks with Parsley & Arugula Salsa Verde with Walnuts, p. 25

Rich, Fudgy Brownies, p. 44, with or without the Port-Ganache Topping

from the editor

Coming to a mailbox
(or newsstand) near you:

Your *Fine Cooking*, in timely fashion

There's nothing worse than a deadly letter from a long-winded editor. But you're going to have to forgive me this once for going on a bit. Don't worry, this isn't about my childhood or some life-altering cooking experience. It's about you and what we're doing for your magazine. So bear with me...

We're changing our on-sale dates. Last fall, I got a few friendly notes from readers asking why their October/November *Fine Cooking*, with a Thanksgiving turkey on the cover, arrived on Labor Day weekend. The letters went something like this: "OK, so this is my favorite magazine, and I'm always excited to get it, but I just can't think about turkeys when it's 90 degrees outside, the grill's still fired up, and my beefsteak tomatoes are just getting ripe."

First, let me explain why this generally happens. Our goal is to get the magazine into subscribers' hands at least a week ahead of the newsstand on-sale date. After all, it's only fair that someone who's paid up front for a year of the magazine should get a copy before it arrives in stores. But because of the vagaries of the postal system, we have to start shipping those magazines almost two weeks before the on-sale date, so many subscribers get them extra-early (hence, turkeys on Labor Day). While there's nothing I can do about the postal system, I did discover

that we have a little control over those newsstand on-sale dates.

So I'm happy to report that, starting with this June/July issue, we've moved the on-sale dates a little bit later so they'll be more in sync with the magazine's seasonal content. For instance, the August/September issue will go on sale August 1—how great is that! That means subscribers will start getting it about July 20—pretty reasonable. We even managed to get that October/November issue moved to late September. Yes, subscribers will still get turkeys in Indian summer, but probably not before the kids are back to school. And our Canadian readers, who celebrate Thanksgiving in early October, will get their issues with plenty of time to plan.

Still seven issues a year, but slightly reconfigured. Instead of publishing six regular issues plus a special holiday *Fine Cooking* each year, we'll now publish seven regular issues. You'll get plenty of special holiday cooking and baking recipes, but they'll all be featured in our December issue, which will carry a bonus pullout section, similar to the one on summer side dishes in this issue (see the adjoining page). And the seventh regular issue will now fall in January, giving us an extra opportunity to cover those delicious winter comfort foods that we all love.

A few more fresh ideas. To round out the changes, we're

also introducing a few editorial "upgrades" in this issue.

❖ **Tasting Panel gets bigger.** We've taken the popular Tasting Panel section of the From Our Test Kitchen department and turned it into its own destination with a little more space. In this issue, we report on our fascinating tasting of canned tuna—and jarred and tinned tuna, too (p. 80).

❖ **Ideas for leftovers.** We've added a "leftovers" section to the Test Kitchen department; check out the delicious chicken salads on p. 76, all crafted from the grilled and roasted butterflied chicken recipes on pp. 53-55.

❖ **A new back cover.** We're introducing our Make It Tonight department on the back cover, which we hope will be a microcosm of all that's special and different about *Fine Cooking*. It will offer a detailed recipe and an inspiring photo, as well as technique and ingredient tips.

❖ **Artisan Foods gets a new home.** Instead of being on the back cover, our Artisan Foods department will now have its own space inside the magazine, where we can keep you up to date on a larger variety of delicious artisan foods.

Thanks for sticking with me on this one; I hope you'll be as



excited about these changes as we are at *Fine Cooking*. And please keep writing those letters and emails; you never know if your latest best idea might be the next new *Fine Cooking* department.

—Susie Middleton, editor

P.S. And one more bonus! *Fine Cooking* is now publishing a free biweekly email newsletter with recipes, tips, and videos. To subscribe, visit www.finecooking.com/signup.

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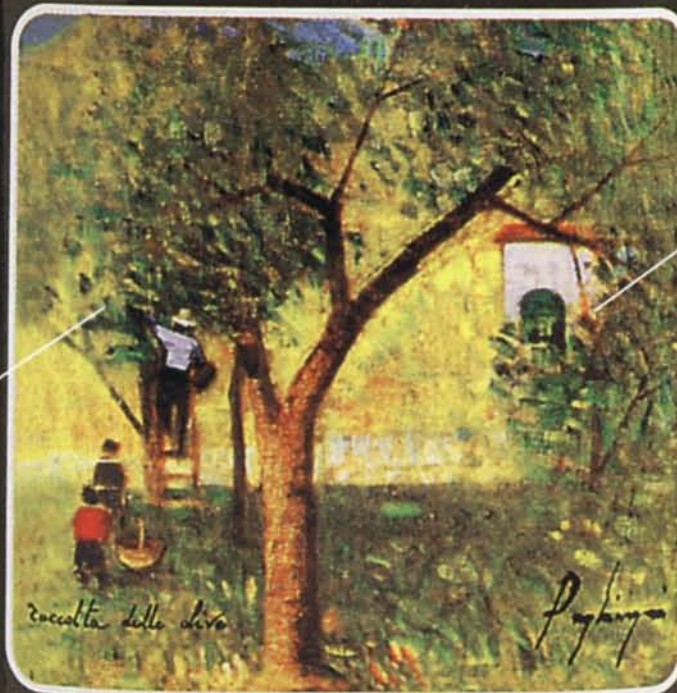
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from our readers

More fish, please

I love the way *Fine Cooking* takes one ingredient (such as broccoli, ribs, or chicken thighs) and shows several ways to cook it. I'm trying to incorporate more fish into our family meals for the health benefits and would love to see an article (or more) on cooking fish. It would also help to discuss which fish are similar enough to one another to substitute in a recipe. Thank you!

—Carrie Emerson, via email

Editors' reply: We hope you enjoyed "Tilapia: Fast & Flavorful" in the last issue (*Fine Cooking* #78), and we wanted to let you know that there's a terrific article from Seattle chef Tom Douglas on crab cakes, salmon cakes, and shrimp cakes coming up in the next issue (*Fine Cooking* #80). In the meantime, turn to p. 50 for a delicious and different idea for cooking flounder (Flounder Poached in Coconut, Ginger & Basil Broth) and to Quick & Delicious, p. 90c, for a salmon recipe.

Don't torch your knife

In *Fine Cooking* #77, you suggest several things to do with a mini torch. One of those suggestions is to use it to heat a knife blade. The flame temperature of butane in one of those mini torches is around 2400°F, more than enough to cause the steel to forget its previous heat treatment, which happens at most at about 1350°F. The thin edge of a sharp knife can reach a high temperature very rapidly in a flame, so the edge may be very hot even though the rest of the knife is only warm, thus your thumb is not a reliable guide in this case. I sug-

gest you consult your favorite metallurgist and then retract the advice you gave or restrict it to utensils about whose edge you do not care about.

—David X. Callaway, via email

Editors' reply: We checked in with our favorite metallurgist, Professor John D. Verhoeven at the Department of Materials, Science & Engineering at Iowa State University. Based on our conversation with him, we agree that it's not a good idea to heat your knife with a mini torch. A short blast from a mini torch *might* not harm the knife edge, but then again, it very well could. To be on the safe side, it's best not to expose a good carbon-steel or stainless-steel knife to an open flame. A better way to heat the blade: Dip it in hot water. That will get the blade warm enough to cut cleanly through gooey cakes but not nearly hot enough to harm the steel.

Tastes great, works too!

I am a subscriber and admirer of your magazine. I read many food magazines, watch Emeril and Alton Brown on TV, and collect cookbooks. More than any other cooking magazine, *Fine Cooking* is the best. In *Fine Cooking* #77 your "Chicken & Potatoes, Side by Side" and "Three Ways To Braise Short Ribs" articles were truly outstanding. The recipes and instructions are easy to understand and follow. The results taste great! Keep up the good work. Thanks.

—David Lilly, Los Angeles, California

A fish by another name

Howdy from Texas! According to my sources (A. J. McClane and Alan Davidson), St. Peter's fish is another name for John Dory—not tilapia. Thanks for a great magazine.

—Nicole Ray, via email

Editors' reply: It looks like we're both correct. After a bit of research, we discovered that tilapia and John Dory are both nicknamed St. Peter's fish. But stick with tilapia for the recipes in *Fine Cooking* #78; that's what we used to test the recipes. ♦

Job opening: Associate/Senior Editor

Fine Cooking seeks a talented, high-energy editor with at least four years of magazine experience. Proven editing and writing skills and cooking school or professional cooking experience are essential. Photo or food styling skills a plus. Position requires moderate travel and relocation to Connecticut. Send a cover letter and resumé to HR, The Taunton Press, 63 South Main Street, Newtown, CT 06470.

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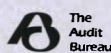
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Getting the most from our recipes

How to follow a recipe

- ❖ Before you start, read the recipe from start to finish so there are no surprises.
- ❖ Before actually starting to cook or bake, gather all the necessary ingredients and equipment. Prepare the ingredients according to the directions in the ingredient list (see "Watch those modifiers" at right for more on this).
- ❖ For determining doneness, always rely first on the recipe's sensory descriptor, such as "cook until golden brown." Consider any times given in a recipe merely as a guide for when to start checking for doneness.

Ingredients

Unless otherwise noted, assume that

- ❖ butter is unsalted
- ❖ eggs are large (about 2 ounces each)
- ❖ flour is unbleached all-purpose (don't sift unless directed to)
- ❖ sugar is white granulated
- ❖ fresh herbs, greens, and lettuces are washed and dried
- ❖ garlic, onions, and fresh ginger are peeled.

Watch those modifiers

A recipe ingredient list contains words such as "diced" and "chopped" that tell you how to prepare each ingredient for the recipe, but what you may not realize is that the placement of these "preparation modifiers" in the ingredient line is as important as the modifier itself. Take, for example, the following two similar lines that you may see in a recipe ingredient list:

1 cup rice, cooked

1 cup cooked rice

The first line is telling you to take 1 cup of rice and cook it; the second line is calling for 1 cup of rice that has already been cooked. The difference between the two is about 2 cups of cooked rice, and that can make a big difference in the outcome of a recipe.

A pint isn't necessarily a pound

Don't confuse fluid ounces with ounces. Fluid ounces are a measure of volume; ounces are a measure of weight. For example, 8 fluid ounces (1 cup) of honey weighs 12 ounces. The only time you can be positive that fluid ounces and ounces are equal is when you're measuring water.

Use the right measuring cup

To measure flour or other dry ingredients, stir the flour and then lightly spoon it into a dry measuring cup and level it with a knife; don't shake or tap the cup. Be sure to measure liquids in glass or plastic liquid measuring cups.



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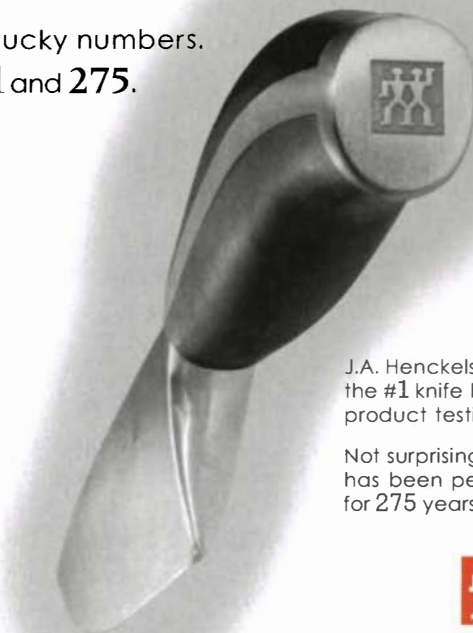
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Tasha DeSerio

Fine Cooking contributing editor **Pam Anderson** ("Rub, Grill, Top," p. 38) keeps her grill right outside the kitchen door. And when she's not busy traveling around the country teaching cooking classes, beside the grill is where you'll find her. On weeknights, Pam favors quick-cooking cuts like turkey cutlets, boneless chicken breast, and pork chops. In this issue, she shares a simple formula that delivers tender, juicy results with exciting flavors. In addition to being the author of several cookbooks, Pam is also the food columnist for *USA Weekend* magazine.

Frequent *Fine Cooking* contributor **Nicole Rees** makes no secret of her passion for all things chocolate and openly admits her quasi-addiction to rich, dark brownies. After years of tinkering with her recipe, she came up with an outrageously fudgy, moist, chocolatey brownie ("Fudgy Brownies," p. 43). When she's not baking brownies, Nicole works as a baker and food technologist in Portland, Oregon. She is the co-author of *Understanding Baking* and *The Baker's Manual*.

When former *Fine Cooking* staffer **Jessica Bard** ("Make Room for Basil," p. 46) isn't busy tending her amazing garden and whipping up delicious meals for family and friends, you might find her teaching one of her popular hands-on cooking classes at Warren Kitchen and Cutlery in Rhinebeck, New York, decorating an extravagant multitiered cake, or lending her food-styling talents to one of our photo shoots.

While writing about the technique of butterflying chicken, **Elizabeth Karmel** ("A Shortcut to Juicy Chicken" p. 52), filled us in on its history: The old-fashioned name for this technique, "spatchcocking," can be traced to 18th century Ireland, where it was short for "dispatch the cock." A frequent *Fine Cooking* contributor, Elizabeth teaches across the country, runs her company, Girls at the Grill, and is the author of *Taming the Flame: Secrets for Hot-and-Quick Grilling and Low-and-Slow BBQ*.

John Ash has a passion for vibrant, fresh produce and in summertime, he likes nothing more than to chop it up to create all kinds of delicious salads ("Chopped Salads," p. 56). The founder and chef of John Ash & Co. restaurant, John teaches wine and cooking classes around the world and has recently co-founded Sauvignon Republic Cellars in northern California. His latest cookbook, *John Ash: Cooking One on One*, received a James Beard award in 2005.

Growing up, **Laura Werlin**'s favorite food in the world was a grilled cheese sandwich. That love for cheese later translated into a career: Today, she is the author of *The New American Cheese*, *The All American Cheese and Wine Book*, and *Great Grilled Cheese: 50 Innovative Recipes for Stovetop, Grill, and Sandwich Maker*. While testing quesadilla recipes for her most recent book, she realized just how versatile these cheese-

filled tortillas could be, and her idea for the story in this issue was born ("Making the Best Quesadillas," p. 60). When Laura isn't writing, she travels the world to lecture; she recently returned from a trip to New Zealand and Australia, where she visited many cheesemakers.

Thai Moreland ("A Fresh Asian Salad," p. 64) was born in Hanoi, in northern Vietnam. She began cooking traditional northern Vietnamese dishes when she was only 7 or 8, and it wasn't long before she mastered much of Vietnam's classic cuisine. In 1973, she moved to the United States with her husband and daughter and continued cooking fabulous Vietnamese food for appreciative friends and family. She now lives and cooks in New York City.

Janie Hibler ("When Berries Meet Pastry," p. 66) has lived in the Pacific Northwest her entire life, and the only thing she likes better than picking berries is eating them. While writing her latest book, *The Berry Bible*, she discovered one versatile crust recipe that she used over and over for multiple berry desserts. In this issue, Janie shows us how to use this kind of recipe for tarts, pies, and turnovers.

A frequent contributor to *Fine Cooking*, **Tasha DeSerio** ("Quick & Delicious," p. 90c) is a cooking teacher, a food writer, and the proprietor of Olive Green Catering in Berkeley, California. Tasha was a cook at Chez Panisse Restaurant & Café in Berkeley for five years.

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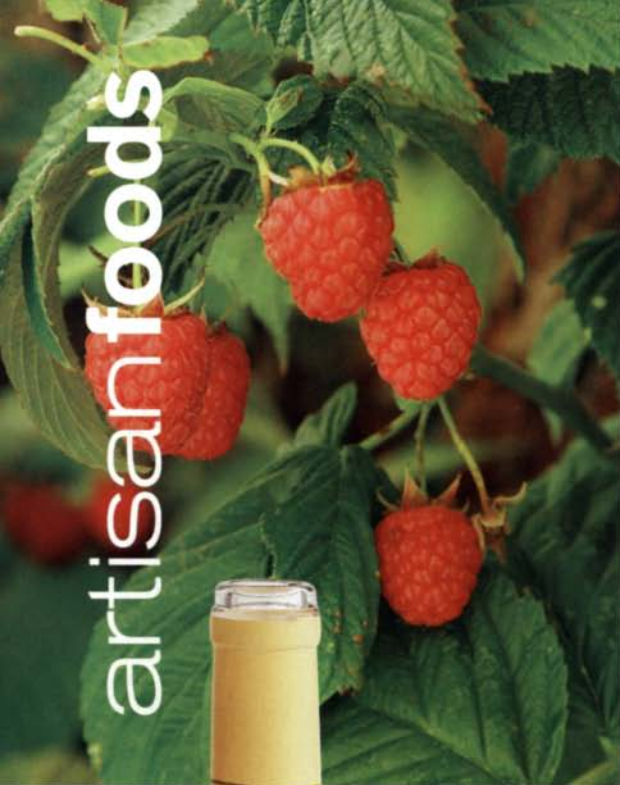


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Winemaker Michael Sones stirs sugar into the raspberry must to aid fermentation.



After measuring the sugar level with a hydrometer, Michael smells and tastes the must to get a sense of fruit and acid balance.



After the berry must is pumped into tanks, assistant winemaker Eleni Papadakis adds yeast to start fermentation.



A Bottle Full of Raspberries

BY LAURA GIANNATEMPO

When I think of fruit wines, I can't help but think of cough syrup: thick and cloying with a crushing sweetness. But Chaucer's hand-crafted raspberry wine from Bargetto, a small family winery in Soquel, California, is a surprisingly pleasant exception. Made from locally grown berries, this wine is like a fragrant mouthful of raspberries; less sweet than most dessert wines, it has a nice, dry finish. Try serving it with chocolate soufflé (or any chocolate dessert) or drizzled over vanilla ice cream.

The Bargetto family harvests raspberries over several growing cycles

and quick-freezes them before consolidating the loads. They make raspberry wine just like grape wine. Except raspberries don't have enough sugar to ferment into alcohol, so winemaker Michael Sones stirs sugar into the raspberry must before natural fermentation occurs in stainless-steel tanks. No artificial flavors or colors are added. The wine, which is not fortified, contains only 10.5% alcohol and should be consumed fairly quickly after bottling. *Chaucer's Raspberry Wine*, \$14 for 500ml, at Bargetto.com. ♦

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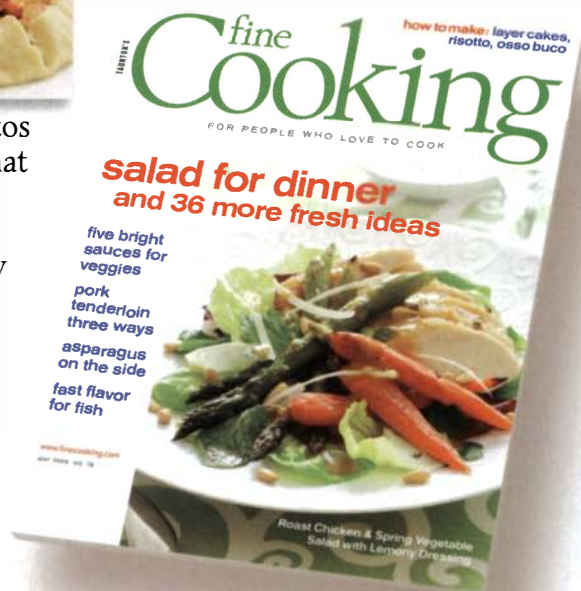
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Measuring tools...

BY REBECCA FREEDMAN

...that rein in unwieldy foods

If you're often annoyed by ingredients rolling off your scale, this could be the scale for you. A raised ring around the border of the platform prevents ingredients (think hazelnuts, cherries, peas) from going anywhere, making it easier to weigh them. *Salter Electronic Ring Food Scale*, \$59.95 at Cooking.com (800-663-8810).



...that take up less space

We hate it when bulky measuring cups jam up our kitchen drawers. The solution: these clever silicone measuring cups that collapse, making them easier to store. Set of four *Chef'n SleekStor collapsible silicone measuring cups* ($\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, and 1 cup), \$19.95 at Surlatable.com (800-243-0852).



...that both measure & prep

This handy measuring bowl set comes with $\frac{1}{4}$ -, $\frac{1}{2}$ -, 1-, $1\frac{1}{2}$ -, and 2-cup bowls, each of which is marked at the halfway point, so you get double the measuring sizes. But we don't use them just for measuring; they're great prep bowls, too, perfect for holding chopped herbs, nuts, and other small ingredients. *Mario Batali five-piece prep bowl set*, \$9.95 at Surlatable.com (800-243-0852).

...that scoop out ingredients

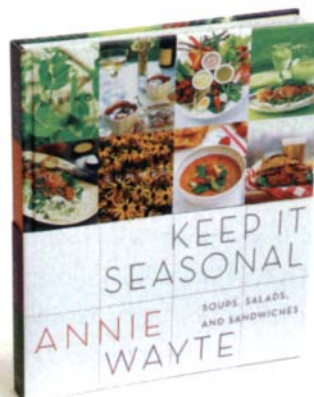
We found these stainless-steel scoops perfect for measuring dry ingredients like rice, sugar, and coffee beans. The scoops are narrow enough to slide right into canisters, and have a nice groove where your thumb rests for a comfortable grip. Set of 1/4-, 1/2-, and 1-cup Amco measuring scoops (model 15073), \$24.99 at Cookscorner.com (800-236-2433).



...that are slim and stable

If you're in the market for a new set of measuring spoons, staffers in our test kitchen swear by these. They are flat and narrow enough to slip into spice jars and have a curved handle that keeps them from tipping over when you set them on the counter. Set of five Cuisipro measuring spoons (from 1/8 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon), \$11.95, at Cheftools.com (866-716-2433).

Books for cooks

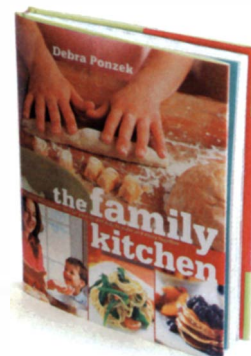


Keep it Seasonal: Soups, Salads, and Sandwiches

by Annie Wayte
(William Morrow, \$29.95)

London and New York chef Annie Wayte's first cookbook is so gorgeous—with spectacular photographs and clean, airy graphics—that it would grace any coffee table. But it's also so jam-packed with enticing recipes that it can motivate even the laziest of cooks to throw on an apron and get cooking.

Wayte encourages the use of fresh, locally grown ingredients at the peak of their season, when they're at their flavorful best. And she provides a happy collection of approachable soups, salads, and sandwiches that put each season's crops to delicious use. From Thai Soup with Lemongrass, Coconut & Ginger, to Swordfish with Spicy Red Lentils & Zucchini Salad, to a Warm Sandwich with Eggplant, Mozzarella & Pesto, Wayte's dishes are eclectic and tempting. While some are easier and quicker than others, all are fresh, distinctive, and never too fussy for the home cook. The book has four parts, one for each season, and contains tips for choosing ingredients and extra ideas for cooking with fruits and vegetables. It's hard to believe this book could linger on anyone's coffee table for too long.



The Family Kitchen: Easy and Delicious Recipes for Parents and Kids to Make and Enjoy Together

by Debra Ponzek
(Clarkson Potter, \$25)

Cookbooks for kids always make me think of colorful little volumes packed with smiley-faced food and endless variations on macaroni and cheese. This one is different. Debra Ponzek wants to make the entire family happy with recipes that are simple enough for kids to enjoy and help prepare, yet satisfying and intriguing enough to keep adults interested. Skeptical, I brought the book home for a spin.

It worked. There's nothing juvenile about pan-seared Pork Chops with Green Apple-Cranberry Compote, Yellow Tomato Gazpacho, or Grilled Shrimp Satay with Ginger & Lime. Sure, there are familiar foods like blueberry pancakes and chicken potpie and things to make on snow days and for bake sales, but the book makes room for more than a few adventurous combinations. Many recipes are quick—perfect for everyday meals—and Ponzek dishes out tips on how to get kids involved in the process, including ideas for child-friendly tasks in each recipe. This may be the perfect book for those who want to share their love for cooking with the whole family without giving up on flavor and creativity.

—Laura Giannatempo, assistant editor ♦

How can I get the odor of onions and garlic out of my wooden cutting board?

—Sandra Peters, via email

A Ted Gravenhorst Jr. responds: Lemon or lime juice and a little salt will go a long way to reducing odor. First, sprinkle your cutting board with either kosher or table salt. Cut a lemon or lime into quarters and use these quarters to rub the salt into the board, squeezing juice onto the board as you go. Let the board sit for two to three minutes and then wipe it clean with a damp cloth. That should do the trick.

Ted Gravenhorst Jr. is the vice president of sales and marketing at John Boos & Co., a manufacturer of premium-quality butcher block products.

Have a question of general interest about cooking? Send it to Q&A, Fine Cooking, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506, or by email to fcqa@taunton.com, and we'll find a cooking professional with the answer.

I love to make ice cream, but when I store it in my freezer, it always gets icy and grainy. How can I prevent this?

—Will Sparks,
Charlottesville, Virginia

A Jon Snyder responds: Homemade ice cream tastes best fresh, so you don't want to store it for too long. (If you've made a good batch, it'll probably be gone pretty fast anyway.) But a few tips can help maintain the smooth texture of your ice cream. First, try using egg yolks or a bit of neutral apricot or peach preserve in your base preparation; these ingredients act as natural stabilizers. Once the ice cream is frozen, don't thaw and refreeze it repeatedly—you can really thaw and re-freeze only once without any noticeable effect on the ice cream's taste and texture. After that, ice crystals begin to form and any smooth texture deteriorates. If you're planning to thaw your ice cream just once, store it at your freezer's coldest temperature; store it at 10° to 15°F higher if you're hoping to dig in over the course of a few days. Finally, ice

cream shouldn't generally be kept for more than a week (this goes for good-quality store-bought, too), although this can be extended by a few weeks if your home freezer is very cold and you don't freeze and thaw too often.

Jon Snyder is the owner of Il Laboratorio del Gelato, an artisan ice cream company in New York City.

When I roll out pie dough, it usually ends up looking more like the state of Georgia than a circle. How do I get an even, round shape?

—Kyra Sanders, via email

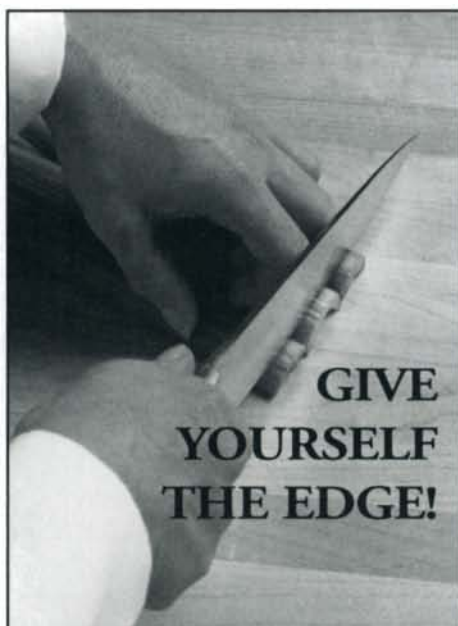
A Carolyn Weil responds: More than anything, getting a perfect round out of your pie dough takes practice, but here are a few pointers to set you on the right track. First, it helps to start with dough that's been formed into the right shape and is at the right temperature. After mixing, shape the dough into a round, flat patty, similar to a half-pound hamburger. If the recipe calls for chilling the dough before rolling, don't chill

it so long that it's hard as a brick. Very firm dough will crack when it's rolled; if your dough is too cold, let it sit at room temperature for a few minutes to warm up. The dough is at an ideal temperature for rolling when it feels cool to the touch and is pliable—it should be able to bend in the middle.

Before you start to roll, tap the pin a couple of times horizontally across the disk and then vertically, like a crosshatch. This flattens the disk slightly without causing it to lose its round shape. Then give the dough a quarter turn, casting a little flour underneath to be sure it isn't sticking before you begin to roll.

Your rolling technique is key. Never roll in a back-and-forth motion—that just pushes the dough back and forth, not out, and can activate gluten development, which makes the pastry tough. Instead, start from the center of the dough and, using a strong, sweeping motion, roll to the top edge, stopping the pressure on your rolling pin $\frac{1}{4}$ inch before the edge. Then roll from the center of the dough to the bottom edge. Rotate the dough a quarter turn, sweep a little flour underneath if needed, and immediately repeat those two rolls, from center to top rim and then center to bottom rim. Rotate the dough, sweep some flour, and repeat. The faster the dough is rolled out, the cooler it remains and the less sticky it will be. Using this method, you should be able to roll the dough into a circle in about twenty quick strokes. This should give you a nice round of dough that doesn't resemble any of the fifty states.

*Carolyn Weil is the author of two cookbooks from the Williams-Sonoma collection: *Pie & Tart* and, most recently, *Fruit Dessert*. ♦*



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Discover the glamorous side of parsley

BY RUTH LIVELY

Store it well, and it keeps for weeks

When I buy parsley, I look for dark color and perky stems. Back home, I wash and dry it thoroughly; it needs a vigorous swishing in two or three changes of water to get out all the grit. While I'm washing it, I also pick over the bunch to discard any yellowed and decaying stems and leaves. A salad spinner is a great way to get the excess moisture off the leaves. If you store parsley loosely in a zip-top bag lined with a paper towel, it will keep fresh for a week—sometimes longer. Alternatively, you can trim at least half an inch off the stems and stand them in a jar of water in the fridge, loosely covered with a plastic bag. I use only the leaves and thin stems, snapping off the thicker lower stems, which I freeze and save for stocks.

Parsley has plenty of partners

Parsley is a good foil for the richness of cheese, from sharp Parmesan to mild fresh ricotta. It rounds out the flavor of pungent ingredients like anchovies, capers, olives, and crushed red pepper flakes, and it's lovely with lemon zest, garlic, shallots, and scallions. Nuts are good enriching partners—especially walnuts, hazelnuts, and pine nuts. A big dose of parsley adds punch to starchy foods like beans, potatoes, winter squash, and grains. You can even mix chopped parsley into the dough of savory biscuits or scones. Finally, when looking for a good mate, think color as well as flavor. Parsley is gorgeous—and delicious—with deep-orange vegetables like butter-nut squash and carrots; or stirred into tomato or red pepper soup.

More than just a garnish

One of my favorite ways to use parsley is in sauces like the ones on the facing page. But I also love this little green herb in salads, pasta sauces, and dips.

For an easy, fresh pasta sauce, toss hot pasta with lots of chopped parsley, a few chopped scallions, diced mozzarella, and a generous drizzle of olive oil. Finish with grated Parmesan.

Make a rich and tasty filling for ravioli or tortellini or for layering lasagna. Mix plenty of finely chopped parsley with creamy ricotta, grated Parmesan, an egg, a little salt, and some freshly grated nutmeg.

Stir up a zesty dip with mashed cooked or canned cannellini beans, chopped celery, minced parsley, minced garlic, and lemon zest. Season well with salt, freshly ground pepper, a pinch of crushed red pepper flakes, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar.

Make an authentic tabbouleh by combining soaked bulgur with lots of chopped curly parsley, chopped scallions, diced tomatoes, and diced cucumber. Dress with a zesty vinaigrette made with olive oil and lemon juice and well seasoned with salt, pepper, chopped fresh mint, paprika, and a little hot pepper, if you like. Serve on a bed of whole lettuce leaves.

Make a fresh herb salad with bibb and oak leaf lettuces, lots of whole parsley leaves, a few mint and chervil leaves, and chopped chives. Add a little fresh goat cheese and season with a light dressing of lemon and olive oil with a touch of honey.

For the longest time, parsley has gotten a bad rap as the wallflower of fresh herbs. You know, the shy, boring one whose presence is an afterthought and who rarely shouts for attention. Well, I think it's time to give parsley its due place in the kitchen. Sure, it may not be as sexy as basil or cilantro, but it *can* be a culinary powerhouse. Because its flavor doesn't scream, you can use it extravagantly without muscling out other flavors. A big dose of chopped parsley enlivens any dish with brilliant, deep-green color and a clean, bright flavor. And don't forget that parsley leaves are beautiful whole, too, and make a lively addition to green salads or light soups.

You'll find two common varieties of parsley at the market: curly and flat-leaf, often called Italian. Both offer bright, grassy flavor, with a delicate balance of tang and sweetness, but flat-leaf parsley is bolder, with a distinctive licorice-like edge. So, for most recipes, I favor the flat-leaf variety, which is also easier to wash. The curly type is particularly good in fresh salads like tabbouleh, where its frilled texture adds welcome bulk.



Parsley & Arugula Salsa Verde with Walnuts

Yields 1 1/4 cups.

This piquant Italian-style sauce is wonderful served with grilled or roasted meats, fish, and vegetables; spooned over braised lamb or veal shanks; drizzled over a bowl of minestrone or puréed soup; stirred into rice; or simply used as a dip for raw vegetables. Try to make the sauce a couple of hours, or even a day, ahead so the flavors have time to meld.

2 cups lightly packed flat-leaf parsley leaves (2 ounces)
8 medium arugula leaves, tough stems removed
1 medium clove garlic
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice; more to taste
2 tablespoons chopped walnuts, toasted
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest (from about 1/2 lemon)

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt; more to taste
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper; more to taste

Rinse the parsley and arugula in cold water and spin dry in a salad spinner. Put all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until the leaves are chopped. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and then process until the mixture is finely chopped and turns into a thick sauce. Scrape into a bowl and set aside for at least 1 hour to let the flavors develop. Taste for seasoning and adjust as necessary with more salt, pepper, or lemon juice.

Two other sauce ideas:

Make a tangy Argentine chimichurri sauce. In a food processor, mince 2 cups tightly packed parsley leaves with 1/2 cup cilantro leaves, 2 tablespoons fresh oregano leaves, 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, 1 garlic clove, and a little olive oil. Slowly add 1/2 to 3/4 cup olive oil and 1/3 cup red-wine vinegar. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Make a classic French anchoiade sauce. In a food processor, mince 2 cups tightly packed parsley leaves with 1 clove garlic, 2 anchovy fillets, 2 teaspoons capers, and just a little olive oil. Slowly add 1/2 to 3/4 cup olive oil and 1/3 cup red-wine vinegar and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Ruth Lively cooks, writes, and gardens in New Haven, Connecticut. ♦

It's easy to grow your own

Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) has the longest season of any herb I grow. I plant purchased seedlings in early April and harvest from them until a killing frost finishes them in late November or early December. You can also grow parsley from seeds. The seed is slow to sprout and can take three weeks to germinate, but you can hasten germination by pouring very hot water over the seeds. Let them soak overnight, or until the water is cool and then plant immediately. If you start parsley indoors or buy seedlings, set them out in the garden while still small, and be sure to handle them gently. Parsley forms a single taproot, and if it's broken, the plant can die. Provide moderately rich soil and regular watering, and you'll be rewarded with lush leaves. Harvest whole stems from the outside of the plant.



When you're chopping

As with any tender, fresh herb, be sure to use a sharp chef's knife when you chop parsley. The sharper your knife, the less the leaves will bruise and wilt. I sometimes like to use a nifty tool called a mezzaluna, which means half-moon in Italian. It consists of a single blade or two parallel blades shaped like a half-moon and is made for repeated rocking back and forth. It's perfect for chopping piles of herbs. (See *Where to Buy It*, p 84.)

equipment

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BY KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY

what's new



Move over, plastic wrap

Sure, plastic wrap comes in handy, but I can't help feeling a twinge of guilt every time I tear off a piece, knowing it's only going to wind up in the trash. And that's why I love these reusable silicone lids from Silicone Zone for sealing bowls of prepped ingredients, cookie dough, or leftovers. To create an airtight seal, simply lay a lid atop any smooth-lipped

bowl—plastic, metal, glass, or ceramic. That's all there is to it. You can also use the lids as trivets and microwave splatter guards. Silicone Zone's Easy Lids are dishwasher-safe, and they come in four sizes: 6, 8¾, 10½, and 12 inches. The lids range in price from about \$7 to \$20 at Surlatable.com.

A new tool for indoor grillers

Don't have a grill? Well, don't let that spoil your summer. A heavy-duty cast-iron grill pan is the next best thing. This new two-sided version from Lodge has a grill on one side and a griddle on the other. You can sear steaks, chops, vegetables, and kebabs on the grill. And on the griddle, you can cook pancakes, toast sandwiches, even stir-fry. We especially like that this pan fits over a single burner—unlike similar larger pans, which occupy two burners. Plus, the pan is preseasoned and ready to use the moment you take it out of its box. The pan sells for \$37.50 at LodgeMfg.com.

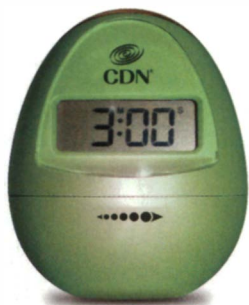


Favorite whisk

This bouncy whisk from Kuhn Rikon has become our test kitchen's go-to tool for little tasks like making quick vinaigrettes and dipping sauces. The whisk's compact head works wonders in situations where bigger whisks aren't very effective: such as when you want to whisk ingredients right in the measuring cup or beat just one egg for a recipe. Kuhn Rikon's Galaxy Spring Whisk sells for \$11.94 at Discountcooking.com.



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round-up

The ABCs of grilling gear

From basting brushes to locking tongs, here's everything you need to get grilling this summer.

B is for basting brush

The angled neck of this silicone basting brush, by Grill Friends, makes it extra easy to brush on barbecue sauces. \$9.99 at Laprimashops.com.

C is for charcoal chimney

A chimney starter lets you bring charcoal briquettes to flame without lighter fluid. This one from Weber sells for \$12.99 at Thekitchenstore.com.

G is for grill thermometer

This thermometer from Taylor sits right on the cooking grate so you can know exactly how hot your grill is. \$13 at Williams-Sonoma.

H is for hardwood charcoal

Forget briquettes. This makes a naturally clean-burning and super-hot fire. We like Lazzari brand, available in some supermarkets—or call the company (800-242-7265) to find retailers near you.

M is for Mitt

Kool-Tek's 15-inch oven mitt delivers excellent heat resistance without sacrificing manual dexterity. \$29.95 at Cooking.com.

Q is for quarter sheet pans

These heavy-duty pans from Chicago Metallic are great for hauling supplies from kitchen to grill. \$11.95 at Bakerscatalogue.com.

S is for skewer

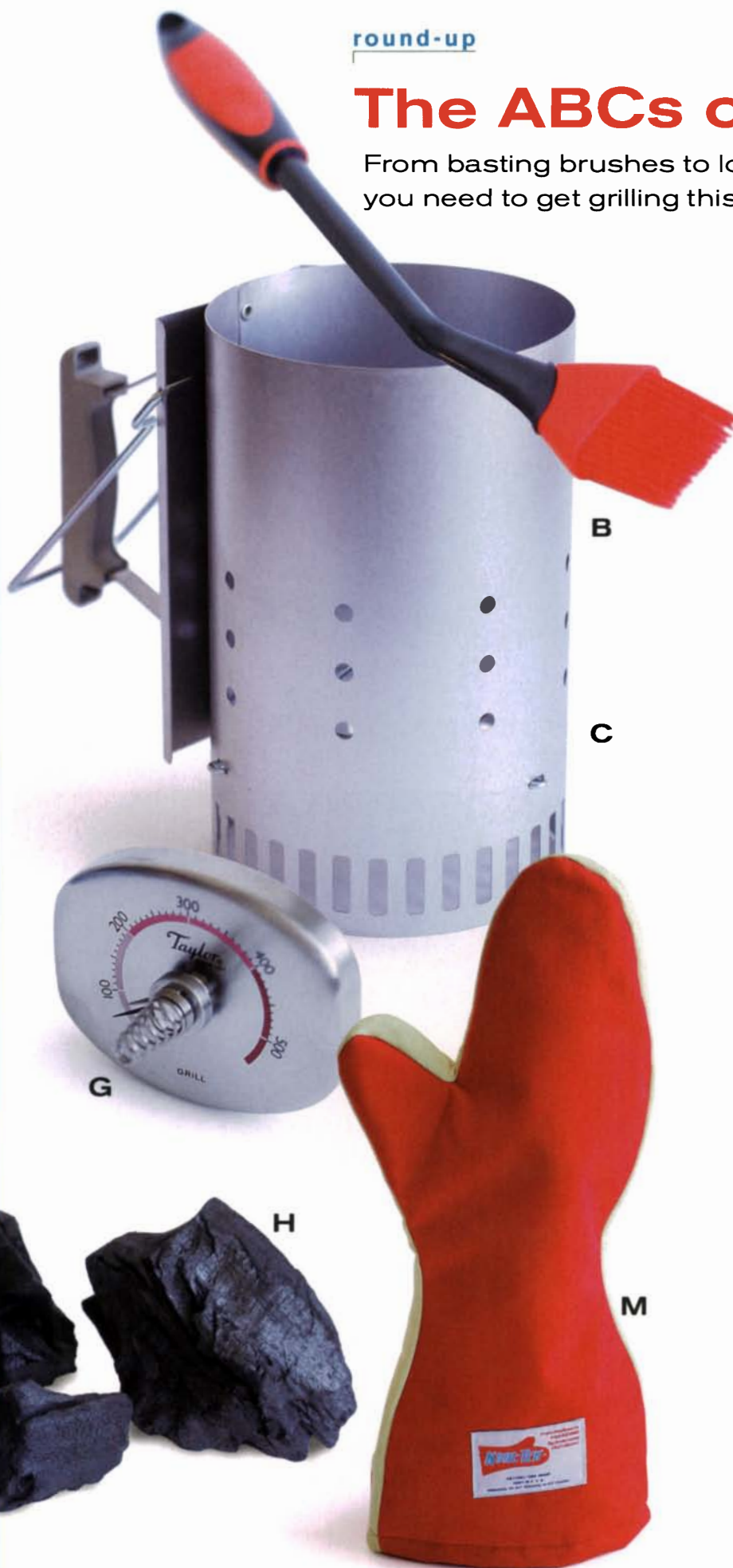
With Steven Raichlen's 6½-inch double-pronged bamboo skewers (perfect for small bites), ingredients won't spin when you flip your kebabs. \$6.99 for a set of 20 at Amazon.com.

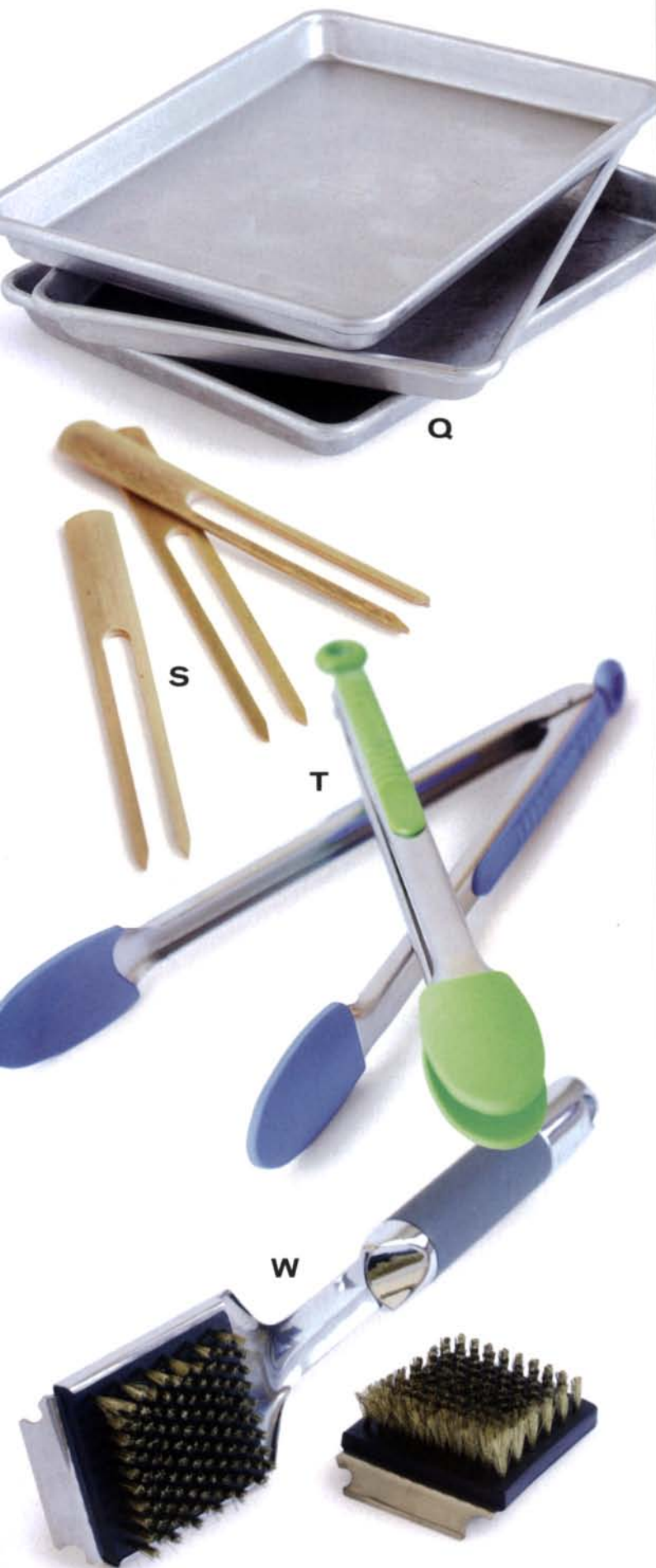
T is for tongs

Messermeister's new silicone-tipped locking tongs come in assorted colors. \$8.99 at Kendelcutlery.com.

W is for wire grill brush

KitchenAid's barbecue grill brush has a replaceable head and a dishwasher-safe handle. \$19.99 at Kitchenaid.com.





New from fine Cooking

Cooking eLetter

In the Current Issue of Fine Cooking | Fine Cooking Home

Hello, Joanne!

We're proud to bring you the *Fine Cooking* eLetter, a free newsletter filled with tips, techniques, seasonal ingredient information, and, of course, delicious recipes. In this eLetter, you'll get terrific ideas for your Easter menu, new ways to cook salmon and asparagus, and more.

HOLIDAY COOKING

A Stuffed Boneless Leg of Lamb for Easter

One of Australia's hottest chefs, Luke Mangan, fills a butterflied lamb leg with a simple savory stuffing of mint, parsley, and toasted pine nuts, and dried currants and serves it with a red onion jam. "This roast serves it with a red onion jam, but with a feels thoroughly modern, but with a respectful nod toward tradition," Mangan says. Your Easter guests will love the flavors, and you'll love the fact that this boneless roast is so easy to carve...



- Read "Stuffed Boneless Leg of Lamb"
- Get recipe: Boneless Leg of Lamb with Mint, Pine Nut & Currant Stuffing

IN SEASON

Two Great Ways to Cook Asparagus

Whether you're looking for the perfect Easter side dish or a quick way to cook asparagus tonight, each of these recipes (and methods) guarantees great asparagus flavor.



MAKE IT TONIGHT

Sear-Roasting: A Quick Weeknight Technique

Wouldn't you like to know how restaurant chefs get salmon fillets so perfectly cooked — brown and slightly crisp on the outside, perfectly cooked and juicy on the inside?...



- Read more of "Sear-Roasting"
- Get recipe: Sear Roasted Salmon Fillets with Lemon-Ginger Butter

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What's fresh and green and has more than 100 vegetable recipes in it? Our latest recipe collection, called *Fresh*, of course! *Fresh* hits the newsstands next week, but you can take a sneak peek at the contents right here:

- Get recipe: New Potato Salad with Spring Vegetables & Shrimp



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Using a remote digital thermometer lets you keep track of your meat's internal temperature without lifting the Egg's lid and losing precious smoke.

worth owning

The Big Green Egg

I love to cook outside, so I've made it an informal goal to put together a versatile outdoor kitchen. A few years ago I acquired a nice DCS gas grill with a rotisserie. Next I added an EVO flat-top grill, a propane-powered griddle. Excellent appliances—but they don't cook with real wood charcoal. And I wanted something that could pump smoky campfire flavor into food. I also wanted something that could crank out kiln-type temperatures for fast searing or be dialed down to a slow bake for whole turkey. When I learned

small fillets at once. The key to the Egg's operation is a finely tuned air-supply system that lets you tweak temperatures very precisely. I've cooked chickens for a couple of hours at as little as 250°F—enclosed in the ceramic cocoon, the meat cooks evenly from all sides and stays remarkably moist. And I must say, the Egg delivers the smoky drumbeat I was after, both immediately and after the fact: broth made from a chicken cooked in the Egg is remarkable for its smokiness.

While whole chickens cook best at slow speed, red meat

I used it all winter long, taking it from below 0° to 700°F without a hitch.

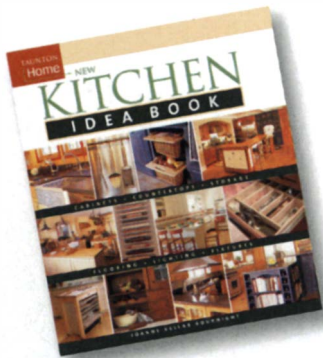
about the Big Green Egg, I was pretty sure I had to add one to my arsenal of outdoor firepower. It has not been a disappointment.

The Big Green Egg is a modern version of a *kamado*, a type of Japanese earthenware cooker. The Egg's shell is a thick, glazed ceramic. According to the manufacturer, a space-age technology makes it extremely durable, and this I know for sure: the shipping company didn't break the Egg during transit, and I used it all winter long, taking it from below 0° to 700°F without a hitch.

I've got the medium-size Egg (\$499 at Hearthsidedistributors.com), which has a 15-inch-wide grill that's big enough to handle a small turkey or a half dozen

benefits from a different approach. For example, I recently put a London broil on the grill directly over a bed of charcoal that was really cranking, 700°F. (With its potential to be tough and dry or tender and tasty, I've long considered London broil the blind date of outdoor cookery.) I seared both sides, closed the lid, and dialed back the heat to 350°F for about 12 minutes. Amazing! Moist, tender, and incredibly smoky, it was the perfect London broil. To see if I could duplicate this magic act, I tried another one a few days later. Well, moist and smoky are still two out of three....

—Chuck Miller,
special issues editor at
Fine Homebuilding magazine



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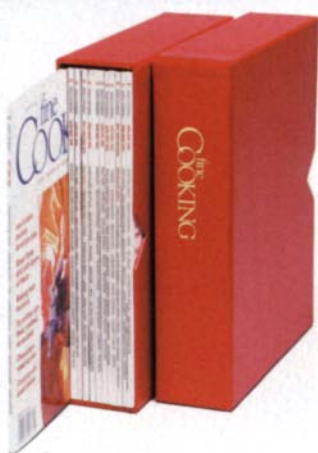
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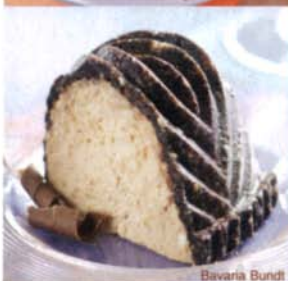
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review:

Rating spice grinders

BY MARYELLEN DRISCOLL

Originally, electric blade grinders were meant to grind coffee. But peek into almost any restaurant kitchen and you'll discover that chefs use these handy little machines for grinding spices instead. It's a practice that home cooks are adopting too—and for good reason. When it comes to depth of flavor, ground spices from a jar just can't compete with freshly ground whole spices.

We recently decided to investigate which electric blade coffee grinders adapt best to the task of grinding spices. And after pulverizing mounds of spices with ten widely available models, we learned that some handle the conversion much better than others.

Some grinders simply can't handle the small quantities of spices

that recipes often call for. The spices either sit untouched below the blades or swirl above their reach. Some grinders' blades aren't sharp enough to swiftly crush hard spices, like peppercorns. And speed matters—the longer it takes to grind spices, the more likely they are to overheat and degrade in flavor. Then there are the design flaws: one product we tested leaked so profusely that it left a ring-shaped pile of ground spices on the counter.

But there's good news, too. We found nearly as many stellar grinders as imperfect ones. For these champs (at right), no spice was too small, too large, too soft, nor too hard to grind. And no quantity, be it a mere teaspoon or a whopping three tablespoons, proved an obstacle.

Cleaning a spice grinder

We've come across all sorts of tips for cleaning spice grinders, like grinding rice, sugar, fresh breadcrumbs, or corn flakes. They all work, but we prefer kosher salt. It's coarse, but it isn't hard on the blades like rice; it doesn't stick like breadcrumbs; and it doesn't leave residual flavor like sugar. Before "cleaning" with salt, thoroughly sweep out the bowl and under the blade with a pastry or small basting brush, preferably a round one. After grinding the salt, sweep again with the brush, and then unplug the machine and swipe it with a damp cloth or sponge.

How we tested

It's worth noting that our tests focused only on grinding spices, not coffee. Grinding both spices and coffee in one machine isn't a good idea—unless you like the idea of cumin-scented java. For our tests, we ground fennel, coriander, and cumin seeds in increments of 1 teaspoon, 1 tablespoon, and 2 tablespoons. We also ground dried ancho chiles, cinnamon sticks, allspice berries, peppercorns, and a mix of whole spices to yield $\frac{1}{4}$ cup curry powder. The grinders featured here performed best overall and are listed in order of ranking.

We also tested the following grinders:

Black & Decker Smart Grind model CBG5; Bodum C-Mill Blade Grinder; Capresso Cool Grind model 503; Cuisinart Coffee Bar Coffee Grinder model DCG-20n; KitchenAid model BCG100BU; and Toastmaster model 1119.

Top pick



DeLonghi Aromatic Coffee Grinder

Model DCG39, \$29.95 at Espressozone.com

This grinder excelled at grinding just about every spice type, quantity, and blend we tested. It ground spices speedily and to an exceptionally fine, even consistency. It's extremely quiet, excellent at pulsing (quick to rev up and quick to stop), and doesn't leak. It's so efficient that you need to watch out for overprocessing and thus overheating—just 20 seconds is all it takes for most spices. With all these strengths, we're more than happy to overlook its bulky size.

Runners-up



Braun Aromatic Coffee Grinder

KSM2, \$24.99 at Theessentials.com

Another standout, this powerful grinder was the only one to ace the black pepper test: grinding a tablespoon of peppercorns into a uniform texture like coarse sand—no whole or partially ground berries—in just five seconds. The blade accelerates the instant you press the on button, but it does take two to three seconds for the blade to stop spinning, so it's not the most efficient at pulsing. It's also on the loud side.



Krups Fast Touch Coffee & Spice Grinder

Model 203, \$19.99 at Surlatable.com

This model grinds spices quickly and evenly. Like the DeLonghi, it's so efficient that you need to be careful not to overprocess and thus overheat your spices. Simply designed yet highly functional, it's a pleasantly quiet machine that also pulses well—the blade stops one second after you release the power.



Hamilton Beach Custom Grind Deluxe Coffee Grinder

Model 80374, \$24.95 at Cooking.com

A consistently solid performer, this model boasts a removable, dishwasher-safe bowl that makes clean-up a breeze (though we wish the bowl were easier to reattach). You can operate the grinder hands-free—press the power button and the grinder stays on—but having to press the button again to turn the grinder off makes pulsing tedious.

Maryellen Driscoll is Fine Cooking's editor at large ♦

Thinking Outside the Bottle

It's time to give box wine a try

BY TIM GAISER

If the words “box wine” give you a flashback to the 1980s, when the only wine that came in boxes seemed to be sweet, headache-inducing plonk—then what I’m about to say might make you question my judgment. But trust me on this: There’s some seriously delicious box wine on the market today. Yes, I did say delicious.

Believe it or not, the box format—a.k.a. “bag-in-the-box,” in reference to the airtight bag that contains the wine—is one of the best ways to package wine (see “The Benefits of the Box” section, facing page). And lucky for us, a growing number of winemakers have begun putting top-notch wine in boxes. Summer cookout season is the perfect time to gather around the spigot and discover them.

Increasingly popular— for good reason

Europeans and Australians have been enjoying good-quality box wines for years. In fact, more than half of all wine consumed in Australia is packaged in boxes or individ-



Wines to enjoy now

The box wine category may be growing, but don't throw away your corkscrew so fast. Box packaging is ideal for wine that's meant to be enjoyed young (an untapped box will keep for about a year). But for age-worthy wines, the bottle remains best.

Here are nine boxes worth tapping into this summer (retail prices are approximate).

White wines

2004 Banrock Station
Chardonnay, South Eastern
Australia, \$17 (3 liters)

2003 Black Box Napa Valley
Chardonnay, \$24 (3 liters)

2004 DTour Chardonnay,
Macon-Villages, \$37 (3 liters)

2004 Wine Block Chardonnay,
\$9.99 (1.5 liters)

Red wines

2004 Hardys Stamp of Australia
Merlot, \$17 (3 liters)

2003 Delicato Shiraz, California,
\$18 (3 liters)

2003 Black Box Cabernet
Sauvignon, Paso Robles, \$24
(3 liters)

2002 Wine Block Cabernet
Sauvignon, \$9.99 (1.5 liters)

2005 Banrock Station Merlot,
Australia, \$17 (3 liters)

ual tetra-packs. Not surprisingly, Aussie brands like Hardys and Banrock Station are helping U.S. consumers believe that good wines don't necessarily have to come in a bottle. And so are the savvy marketing efforts—and well-made products—of popular California brands such as Black Box, Wine Block, and Three Thieves.

I tasted a range of box wines in preparation for this article, and I found several that I'd be happy to have in my glass anytime (see the sidebar at left). On the whole, these are young, fruity wines; they're balanced and food-friendly, perfect for picnics and barbecues. Particularly impressive was the DTour Macon-Villages Chardonnay, from well-known sommelier Daniel Johnnes, with its stylish packaging and focused green apple, citrus, and mineral flavors. Also, the Black Box offerings were excellent, especially the lush, concentrated Cabernet Sauvignon.

Apart from their good quality, what also sets new-generation box wines apart from those of yesteryear is variety. Today you can choose among such varietals as Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Pinot Grigio, and Shiraz—not so long ago, you'd be hard-pressed to find much besides White Zinfandel.

The benefits of the box

Top wineries have good reasons for making the leap from bottle to box. It's hard to argue with a portable, convenient package that keeps wine fresh and delightfully drinkable for weeks, even months.

Convenience. Wine boxes are portable and nonbreakable, and no corkscrew is ever required. The format couldn't be simpler: A wine-filled plastic bag is nestled in a cardboard box with a spigot. Every time you fill your glass, the bag collapses, without allowing air to ever come in contact with the wine.

Freshness. If the wine is consumed within four to six weeks, every glass should taste as good as the first. By comparison, if you open a bottle of wine for a glass or two, the remaining wine can oxidize in one to three days, depending on the particular wine. So the box is a perfect solution for those who just want a glass of wine with dinner.

Price. New-generation wine boxes generally hold 3 liters, the equivalent of four regular 750ml bottles. And though prices for some of the best boxes approach \$50, most can be found for between \$12 and \$20, the equivalent of \$3 to \$5 a bottle. And when you think in terms of cost per glass—a \$10 bottle of Chardonnay would cost out at about \$1.96 a glass, while a \$17 box would run you just 84 cents a glass—it's even clearer that box wines can save you real money.

Tim Gaiser, a contributing editor to Fine Cooking, is a master sommelier. ♦



No corkscrew required. To fill your glass, just tap the spigot.



Winning tip

Get perfect strawberry slices with an egg slicer

When I need evenly sliced strawberries, especially for topping desserts, I use an egg slicer. First I stem the strawberries, and then I slice them just as I would a boiled egg. It's fast, easy, and the slices come out clean and flawless.

—Kathleen Probst, Richville, Minnesota

A prize for the best tip

We want your best tips—we'll pay for the ones we publish—and we'll give a prize to the cleverest tip in each issue. Write to Tips, *Fine Cooking*, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506 or email ftips@taunton.com.

The prize for this issue's winner: The new Cuisinart SMO-56 "Smooth Operator" blender; value, \$145.



Trouser hangers hold food magazines

I'm an avid *Fine Cooking* reader, and I cook from it quite often. But I sometimes find it difficult to hold the magazine open at the page I need while I'm juggling hot pans and kitchen appliances. Besides, it takes up precious counter space. So I use a trouser hanger to clip the magazine open, then I hang it on a cabinet knob or utensil rack in the kitchen.

—Dann Hoxsey, Toronto, Ontario

Use foil to roast and steam peppers

When I roast peppers or chiles, I line the roasting pan with foil. Then I use the foil to wrap and steam the peppers once they're roasted (instead of transferring them to a covered bowl, as is often recommended). This results in two fewer items to wash: the roasting pan and the bowl.

—Cathy Carter, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Reach in all nooks with a toothbrush

I use a toothbrush to clean in small places where a sponge won't fit, like the wheels of a can opener or the base of a blender. A regular toothbrush works fine, but I like to use an electric toothbrush with a round tip. (I keep the tip in a kitchen drawer so I don't mistake it for my real toothbrush.)

—Laura B. Fife, Bend, Oregon

A teaspoon doubles as a melon baller

I don't own a melon baller, so I use a metal teaspoon or tablespoon measure to make melon balls. Both work just as well as a melon baller, and I can make balls of different sizes, too.

—Sandra Levinson, via email



Prevent pans from shifting in a water bath

Whenever I bake cheesecake or custards in a water bath, I start by laying a folded kitchen towel on the bottom of the water bath pan. Then I place it on the oven rack, put the cake pan or custard ramekins on the towel, and pour in hot water. The towel keeps the cake pan or ramekins from sliding when moving the water bath in and out of the oven.

—Joanne Neiheisel,
Edgewood, Kentucky

smart marinating tips

Plan ahead

I rarely have time to grill during the week unless I plan ahead. On weekends, I freeze several batches of beef, pork, or chicken in plastic zip-top bags in their marinades. Before going to work in the morning, I pull out a bag from the freezer and transfer it to the fridge to thaw. When I get home, the meat is ready for the grill.

—Caitlyn Sassaman,
Victoria, British Columbia

Eliminate cleanup

When preparing a marinade for grilling meats, I line a mixing bowl with a zip-top plastic bag and mix the marinade ingredients in the bag. The bowl provides the stability I need, and when I'm done mixing, I simply add the meat to the bag, seal it, and remove it from the bowl. No clean up is necessary, and the bag is ready to be refrigerated or frozen.

—Amy Cattanach, via email

Measure and store flour in a zip-top bag

I used to pour flour into a container, measure it, then struggle to return it into its original paper bag. Now I pour flour into a gallon-size plastic zip-top bag and toss the paper bag it came in. I can easily spoon some flour into a cup measure inside the open bag without making a mess. When I'm done, I zip the bag closed, label it, and store it in the pantry. It takes up less space than a canister.

—Anne-Leslie Dean,
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

No strings attached to your celery

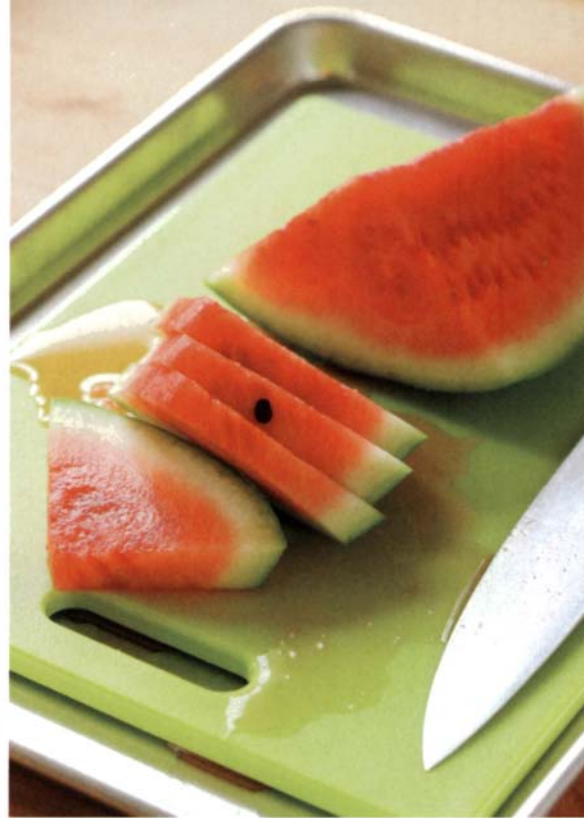
I love the taste and crunch of raw celery in salads or with hummus, but I don't like those pesky strings that get caught between my teeth. So before slicing or dicing celery, I peel it with a vegetable peeler, just as I would a carrot.

—Chris White, Yardley, Pennsylvania

In-a-pinch colander

I once found myself in a friend's kitchen without a colander, so I made one on the spot. I rinsed an empty milk carton and opened the top. Then I took a sharp paring knife and cut a few vertical slits on all four sides. Using the tip of the knife, I made a bunch of small holes in the bottom. I ended up with a very serviceable drainer.

—R. B. Himes, Vienna, Ohio



Cutting watermelon—mess-free

Cutting and seeding watermelon can be a drippy, sticky mess. So when I have one to slice, I do it on a cutting board placed in a rimmed baking sheet that's larger than the board. When I'm done, the sweet juices are contained in the baking sheet, ready to be used for a refreshing beverage or for making a sorbet. This method works well with all foods that release a lot of liquid when cut.

—Faye P. Whitaker, Verona, Wisconsin

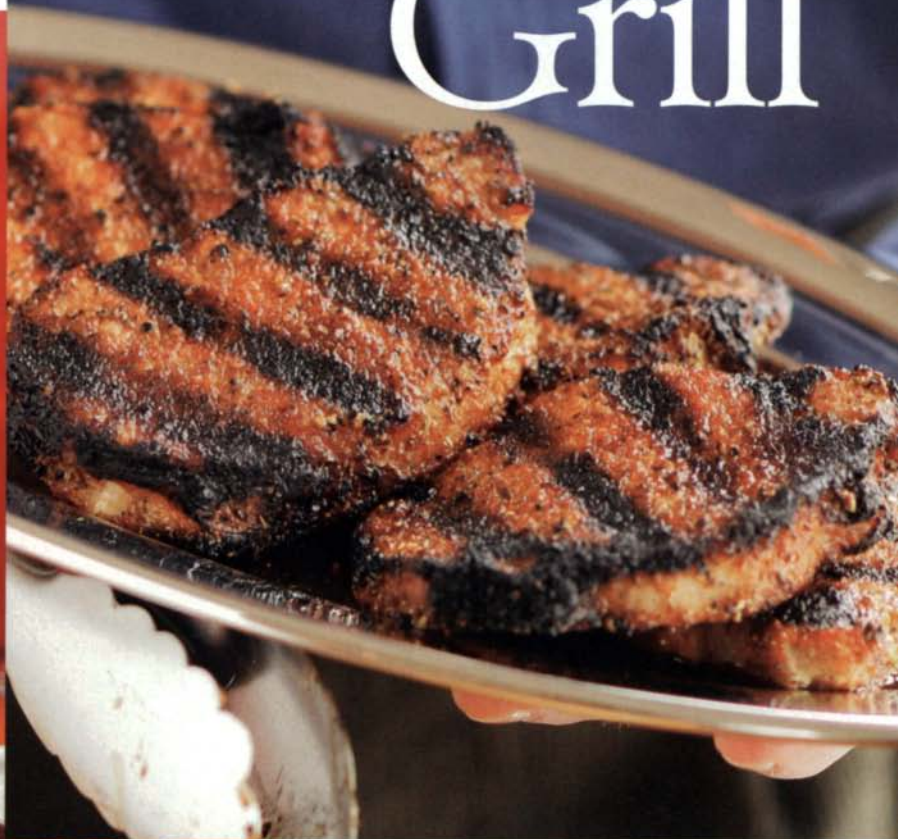
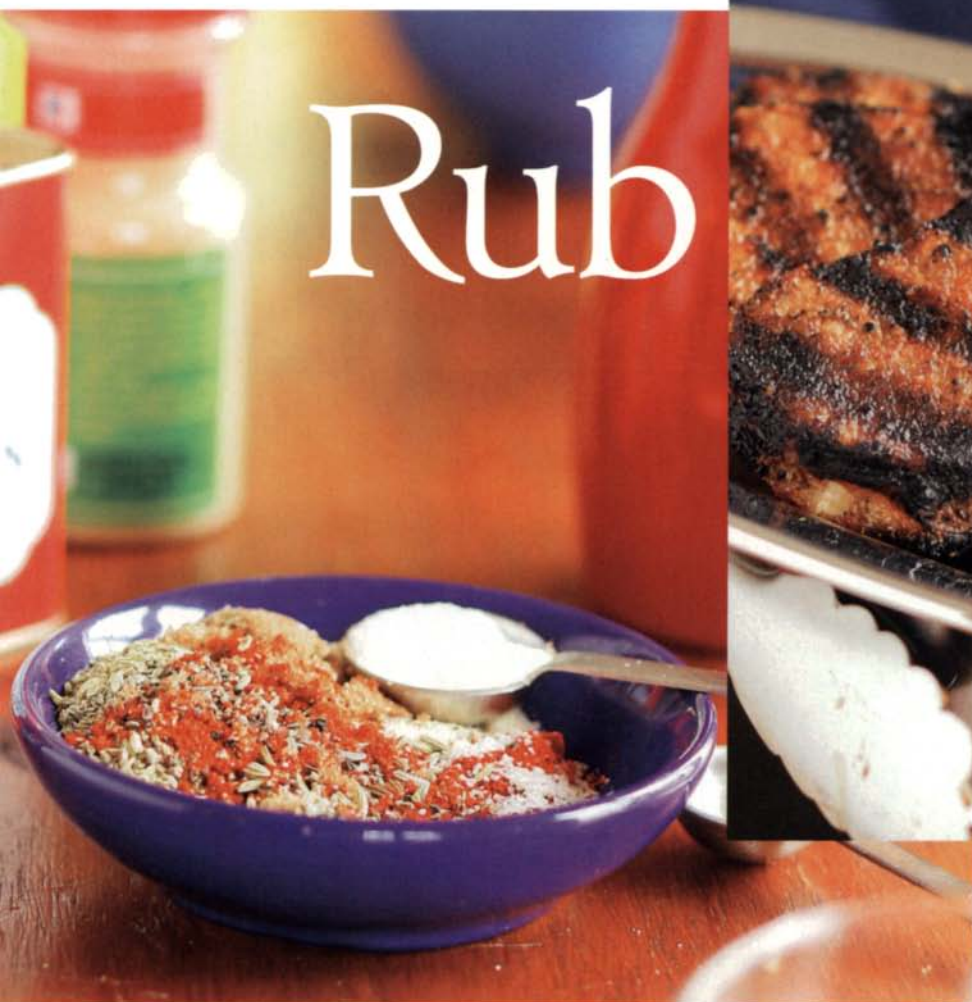
Reinforce the bottom of deviled eggs

When preparing deviled eggs, stuffed tomatoes, or other stuffed round foods, it's often necessary to cut a thin slice from the bottom to make it flat and prevent the food from rolling around on the serving platter. If the remaining base seems too thin to support the filling, I slip the reserved slice into the hollow of the food before stuffing it to line and reinforce the cut bottom.

—Heather Jane McCormick,
Brooklyn, New York ♦

Rub

Grill



BY PAM ANDERSON

Add fast flavor
to chicken,
pork, or turkey
with spice rubs
and salsas

Without a doubt, boneless chicken breasts, boneless pork chops, and turkey cutlets are perfect summer cuts. Nearly everyone likes them, they're lean, and they cook very quickly—so quickly, in fact, that they're all too easy to overcook. But I've found a way around that problem. The recipes on the following pages adhere to a simple formula—rub, grill, top—that makes these lean cuts attractive, juicy, and flavorful.

The key to it all is a spice rub that both enhances the meat's flavor and helps the meat quickly develop gorgeous sear marks—before it has a chance to dry out. I've paired each spice rub with a complementary salsa that gets spooned over the grilled meat at serving time. The salsas add bright flavor and extra succulence. All of the paired spice rubs and salsas taste great with chicken, pork, and turkey; the choice is yours. Whichever you choose, you'll have the perfect summer main course—simple enough for weeknight supper, impressive enough to share with guests.

A large, light blue bowl filled with a vibrant salsa made of diced tomatoes, green onions, and fresh basil sits on a dark wooden table. In the background, a white plate holds several pieces of grilled meat, likely pork chops or chicken breasts, which are garnished with the same salsa. The scene is set against a warm, blurred background, suggesting an outdoor or rustic dining environment.

Top

master recipe

Spice-Rubbed Grilled Pork Chops, Chicken Breasts & Turkey Cutlets

Serves six.

Make your spice rub and salsa before you grill the meat.

6 boneless pork loin chops, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick; or 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, tenderloins removed, breasts pounded lightly to about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick; or 6 turkey breast cutlets
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

Spice rub and salsa pair of your choice (see the recipes on pp. 40-42)

Build a hot charcoal fire or heat a gas grill with all burners on high for at least 10 minutes. While the grill heats, lightly coat both sides of the pork chops, chicken breasts, or turkey cutlets with the oil and rub with the spice rub. Clean the hot grate with a wire brush; oil the grate.

Grill the meat (uncovered for charcoal; covered for gas) over direct heat on the hottest part of the grill, taking care not to crowd the meat. Cook until the meat forms impressive grill marks on one side, 2 to 3 minutes. Turn and continue to grill (uncovered for charcoal; covered for gas) until the meat is just firm to touch and just cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes for turkey cutlets; 3 to 4 minutes for pork chops and chicken breasts, depending on their thickness. (If grilling pork, watch out for flare-ups.) Transfer to a serving platter and let rest for 5 minutes. Serve with the paired salsa spooned alongside or over the meat.

Mediterranean

The fragrant fennel-paprika rub and the briny cherry tomato salsa evoke the cuisines of Italy.

spice rub

Fennel-Paprika Spice Rub

Yields about 3½ tablespoons.

- 2 teaspoons dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons crushed or chopped fennel seeds
- 1½ teaspoons sweet paprika
- 1½ teaspoons garlic powder
- 1½ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

In a small bowl, mix the brown sugar, fennel seeds, paprika, garlic powder, pepper, and salt.

wine

Whichever meat you choose, a fruity, dry rosé, like the 2004 Bonny Doon Ca del Solo Big House Pink (\$10), would be a delicious match.

salsa

Cherry Tomato Salsa with Capers & Green Olives

Yields 2½ cups.

- 2 scant cups cherry (or grape) tomatoes, quartered
- ½ small red onion, cut into small dice (about ½ cup)
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped pimento-stuffed green olives
- 2 tablespoons drained capers
- 2 tablespoons torn fresh basil leaves
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice; more to taste
- ½ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, onion, olives, capers, basil, garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, lemon zest, and ¼ teaspoon each kosher salt and pepper. Let stand while the meat grills. Before serving, adjust the lemon juice, salt, and pepper to taste.

Southwest

Magic happens when the warm spices in the rub meet the flavors of the cool grapes and scallions.

spice rub

Ginger, Cinnamon & Clove Spice Rub

Yields about 3 tablespoons.

- 1** tablespoon dark brown sugar
- 2** teaspoons sweet paprika
- 1½** teaspoons garlic powder
- 1½** teaspoons ground ginger
- 1** teaspoon kosher salt
- ½** teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛** teaspoon ground cloves

In a small bowl, mix the brown sugar, paprika, garlic powder, ground ginger, salt, cinnamon, and cloves.

salsa

Green Grape Salsa with Scallions & Mint

Yields about 2¾ cups.

- 2** cups seedless green grapes, quartered
- ½** medium green bell pepper, cut into small dice (about ⅓ cup)
- 2** medium scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced (about ¼ cup)
- 1** small fresh jalapeño, cored, seeded, and minced (about 1 rounded tablespoon)
- 3** tablespoons chopped fresh mint
- 2** tablespoons fresh lime juice; more to taste
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

In a medium bowl, mix the grapes, bell pepper, scallions, jalapeño, mint, lime juice, and ¼ teaspoon each kosher salt and pepper. Let stand while you grill the meat. Before serving, adjust the lime juice, salt, and pepper to taste.

wine

Try a medium-bodied white with vibrant fruit, herbal notes, and little or no oak, such as the 2004 Fontaleoni Vernaccia di San Gimignano, Tuscany (\$15)—or a fruity young Grenache blend, such as the 2003 Delas Côtes du Ventoux, France (\$12). Both pair well with poultry or pork.



Caribbean

The ripe, tropical flavors of this salsa couldn't find a better partner than the curry-inspired rub.



salsa

Pineapple Salsa with Radishes, Peppers & Cilantro

Yields about 3 1/3 cups.

1/2 to 3/4 medium-size fresh pineapple, peeled, quartered, cored, and cut into small dice (about 2 cups)

4 large radishes, trimmed and cut into small dice (about 3/4 cup)

1/2 medium orange or yellow bell pepper, cut into small dice (about 2/3 cup)

3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice; more to taste

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a medium bowl, mix the pineapple, radishes, bell pepper, cilantro, lime juice, and 1/4 teaspoon each kosher salt and pepper. Let stand while you grill the meat. Before serving, adjust the lime juice, salt, and pepper to taste.

spice rub

Cumin, Coriander & Turmeric Spice Rub

Yields a scant 1/4 cup.

1 tablespoon dark brown sugar

2 teaspoons ground coriander

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder

1 teaspoon kosher salt

3/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric

In a small bowl, mix the brown sugar, coriander, cumin, garlic powder, salt, ginger, and turmeric.

wine

If you're grilling chicken or turkey, try a crisp, fruity New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, like the 2005 Kim Crawford Marlborough (\$16). If you grill pork, try a fruity red, like the 2004 Rosemount Estate Diamond Label Shiraz-Grenache (\$19).

Pam Anderson is a contributing editor to Fine Cooking. Her most recent book is Perfect Recipes for Having People Over. ♦

Rich, Fudgy Brownies

BY NICOLE REES

I've been a professional baker for more than ten years, and what's the dessert I make at home—over and over? I admit it: brownies. Unsophisticated, yes, but for a serious chocolate fix, few things satisfy like a bite into a soft, chewy, densely chocolatey brownie. I'm sure you know that there are two kinds of brownies: the fudgy kind and the cakey kind. But let's be honest: Have you ever met a “cakey” person? I haven't. I'm willing to bet that everyone's favorite brownies are moist, fudgy, packed with intense chocolate flavor, and not too sweet. Just like these.

Add a port-ganache topping, and this simply delicious brownie turns decadent. The basic brownie is a breeze to whip up. You can easily mix the batter by hand, and you don't have to melt any chocolate. A good dose of natural cocoa powder gives these brownies a deep, complex chocolate flavor. But with just a teensy bit more effort, you can also turn this indulgent afternoon snack into something a little more grown-up. Just add dried cherries or cranberries to the batter and top the brownies with a rich, port-infused ganache to serve them for dessert. I assure you that your guests will be at your feet, begging for more.



Get Even Better

A delicious afternoon snack...



Rich, Fudgy Brownies

Yields one 9-inch-square pan of brownies; serves sixteen.

This brownie recipe gives you two options: for a picnic or a snack, make the brownies with the first eight ingredients. For an elegant dessert, add the port-soaked dried cherries to the batter and frost the cooled brownies with the port-ganache topping.

8 ounces (1 cup) unsalted butter; more softened butter for the pan
3 ounces ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup) unbleached all-purpose flour; more for the pan
2 cups granulated sugar
4 large eggs, at room temperature
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ ounces ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) unsweetened natural cocoa powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt
Port-Soaked Dried Cherries (optional; see the recipe at right)
Port-Ganache Topping (optional; see the recipe at far right)

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a 9-inch-square metal baking pan, tapping out the excess flour.

Melt the butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Remove the pan from the heat. Whisk or stir in the sugar, followed by all four of the eggs and the vanilla. Stir in the flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt, starting slowly to keep the ingredients from flying out of the pan and stirring more vigorously as you go. Stir until the batter is smooth and uniform, about 1 minute. If you're using the port-soaked cherries, stir them in at this time, along with any remaining liquid from the saucepan.

Spread the batter into the prepared baking pan, smoothing it so it fills the pan evenly. Bake until a toothpick or a skewer inserted $\frac{3}{4}$ inch into the center of the brownies comes out with just a few moist clumps clinging to it, about 40 minutes. Let the brownies cool completely in the pan on a rack.

If you're topping the brownies with the ganache, spread it evenly over the cooled brownies and give the ganache about an hour to set (it will still be quite soft and gooey). Cut into 16 squares. Keep the brownies at room temperature, well wrapped. You can freeze them, too.

Port-Soaked Dried Cherries

Yields $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried cherries, very coarsely chopped (or whole dried cranberries)
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup tawny port

In a small saucepan, bring the cherries and port to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat to low and cook for 2 minutes. Take the pan off the heat and let cool to room temperature.



...dresses up for the evening

Port-Ganache Topping

Yields 1 generous cup.

½ cup tawny port

½ cup heavy cream

**6 ounces semisweet chocolate, finely
chopped (about 1 cup)**

In a small saucepan over medium heat, bring the port to a boil. Boil until the port is reduced to 2 tablespoons, 3 to 6 minutes. Pour it into a small cup or bowl. Thoroughly rinse the pan. Bring the heavy cream to a boil in the pan over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Take the pan off the heat. Stir in the chopped chocolate and reduced port until the mixture is smooth and the chocolate is melted.

Pour the ganache into a bowl and cover the surface with plastic wrap to prevent a skin from forming. Put the bowl in a cool part of the kitchen and let the ganache cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally. When it's cool, spread it over the brownies as directed in the brownie recipe.

Nicole Rees, co-author of Understanding Baking and The Baker's Manual, lives and bakes in Portland, Oregon. ♦

Make Room for Basil

BY JESSICA BARD

I cook with basil year-round, but I'm at my most inspired and inventive during the summer, when I can harvest it fresh from my garden. Brushing against the tender leaves releases such a waft of rich, spicy fragrance that I'm instantly moved to cook something. So I'll pinch a bunch, grab some tomatoes, and head to the kitchen—the hard part is deciding what to make. The possibilities are virtually endless.

New basil varieties inspire new ways with basil. I've had a recurring summer fling with Sweet Genovese basil—its mildly peppery flavor has distinctive notes of anise, mint, and clove—but there are dozens of other basil varieties, each with its own personality. This year, in addition to my beloved sweet basil, I planted several other basil (see the facing page) so I could experiment with them.

Now that I've gotten to know some new kinds of basil, I've found delicious ways to work them into my cooking. When I'm making Southeast Asian dishes, like the ginger-coconut broth for fish on p. 50, I toss in fragrant, compact Thai basil leaves. Purple basil, I've found, make tasty, eye-catching additions to lettuce salads. And



Whether you grow your own or buy it, summer's favorite herb tastes delicious in almost any dish



Discover the many faces of basil

Basil is such an appealing herb, it's no wonder it's a favorite among gardeners. The most common plants are a sweet variety that's often labeled "Genovese." The seven varieties I'm growing this year (shown here) may be named somewhat differently at your nursery.

Purple Ruffles

This variety's large, shiny maroon leaves have distinctive frilly edges. The flavor is on the delicate side, with soft notes of licorice, sweet cinnamon, and mint. It's happy to be an ornamental plant, but the leaves can also be used in place of sweet basil.



Sweet Genovese

This familiar variety has large, satiny green leaves and is very fragrant. Its flavor is delicious in pasta sauces and tomato salads.



Dwarf Bush

This compact bushy plant, also known as Spicy Globe or Greek basil, has dainty leaves and grows well in a pot on a sunny kitchen windowsill. The leaves have a pungent peppery aroma with citrus and mint notes and make a beautiful garnish on fish or salads.

Dark Opal

More mildly flavored than sweet basil, this variety has dark purple, almost black, leaves with subtle notes of cinnamon, anise, mint, and clove. The leaves, torn or sliced, in salads or other uncooked summer dishes.



Cinnamon

Native to Mexico, this variety has vivid green leaves with reddish-purple stems. Sweetly fragrant with a bright, spicy, cinnamon flavor, it's especially good with bean salads and spicy vegetable dishes.

Thai

The small pointy green leaves of this variety are sometimes mottled with purple, and the plants have purple-red stems. Its heady, sweet peppery aroma has strong notes of anise and licorice. Use this variety in Southeast Asian dishes.



Miniature Purple

This compact plant has tiny purple and green leaves on slender purple stems. Fragrant and flavorful, the leaves are delicious sprinkled on pizza and salads.



Cinnamon basil is wonderful in spicy bean salads and vegetable dishes—even salsa.

Basil elevates other ingredients effortlessly. A natural partner for tomatoes, basil is also wonderful with soft cheeses like mozzarella, and it's equally at home in Asian recipes. In my recipes, I call for some of the basil I grew in my garden. If you can find them (for sources, see p. 84), I hope you'll use them. But, rest assured, I tested all the recipes that follow with regular old sweet basil from the supermarket's produce department, and they worked equally well.

Experiment boldly and you'll reap delicious rewards. One of my favorite basil recipes is pesto, an Italian sauce made by puréeing basil with garlic, nuts, cheese, and olive oil. Herbaceous and garlicky pesto is especially good with hot pasta (though it also works as a sauce). This year, I discovered that I can enjoy the flavor of pesto without getting into the whole production of making the sauce, by simply tossing all the ingredients together with hot pasta; hence, my Deconstructed Pesto Pasta recipe on the facing page. It couldn't be easier or more delicious.

My success with that experiment inspired me to rethink another basil classic, Insalata Caprese. Traditionally, this simple salad consists of sliced ripe tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, and fragrant basil leaves layered on a plate. In my version (at right) I stuff bite-size cherry tomatoes with diced fresh mozzarella and chopped basil. A great appetizer, these little stuffed tomatoes deliver all the great flavors of the salad that inspired them but in a much cuter package.

If there's one thing I'm learning from my adventures with basil, it's this: Feel free to experiment boldly. With an herb as delicious and versatile as basil, it's nearly impossible to go wrong.



Cherry Tomatoes Stuffed with Mozzarella & Basil

Yields about 3 dozen hors d'oeuvres; serves ten to twelve as an appetizer.

½ pound fresh mozzarella, cut into tiny dice (to yield about 1¼ cup)

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

⅓ cup coarsely chopped fresh basil leaves

½ teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest (from about a quarter of a lemon)

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pint (about 18) cherry tomatoes, rinsed and stems removed

In a medium bowl, stir the cheese, oil, basil, zest, ½ teaspoon kosher salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 4 hours before assembling.

When ready to assemble, slice each tomato in half (either direction is all right) and scoop out the insides with the small end of a melon baller or a teaspoon. Sprinkle lightly with salt. Invert onto a paper towel and let the tomatoes drain for 15 minutes.

Fill each tomato half with a scant teaspoon of the cheese mixture and arrange on a serving tray. Serve immediately as an hors d'oeuvre, or wrap and refrigerate for up to 2 hours.





Deconstructed Pesto Pasta

Serves four to six as a main course.

Kosher salt
½ cup pine nuts
1 pound dried fusilli or radiatore pasta
6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
8 cloves garlic, very thinly sliced
Freshly ground black pepper
4 ounces coarsely grated Pecorino Romano (about 1 cup); more for serving
2 cups (about 2½ ounces) packed sweet basil leaves or your favorite basil variety, cut into ¼-inch-wide strips (to yield about 1½ cups)

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Meanwhile, toast the pine nuts in a 10-inch skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until golden in places, about 5 minutes. Pour onto a plate and set aside to cool. When the water boils, add the pasta and cook according

to package directions until al dente.

While the pasta is cooking, gently heat the olive oil and sliced garlic over low heat in the same skillet used for the nuts, stirring frequently, until the garlic starts to turn golden, 4 to 8 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in ¾ teaspoon kosher salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper.

When the pasta is done, scoop out ½ cup of the cooking liquid and reserve. Drain the pasta and return it to the pot. Pour the garlic and olive oil over the hot pasta and toss. Pour the reserved pasta water into the skillet, swirl it around, and pour it over the pasta. Toss well. Add the pine nuts and cheese and toss again until thoroughly mixed.

Transfer to a serving bowl and let cool for 5 minutes. Then, just before serving, toss in the basil. Pass extra cheese around with a grater for those who want more.

Handling basil



Storage tips

I've experimented with many ways of storing basil, and what works best for me is keeping the stems of cut basil in a jar of water in a cool spot in the kitchen, as if it were a bouquet of flowers. With regular changes of water, basil will keep for three to five days like this. If you must refrigerate basil, keep it in the jar and cover the leaves loosely with a plastic bag (preferably a thicker type, like a heavy-duty zip-top bag). If you get basil from the store that's been refrigerated in a plastic box or bag, you should leave it in that packaging.

Treat basil with care

This sun-loving herb is vigorous in the garden but once cut, it's fragile and susceptible to bruising, so careful handling and storing are a must. In my early restaurant days, on herb duty, the chef made me sharpen my knife every few minutes when cutting herbs to avoid bruising the tender leaves. Perhaps that was overkill, but I did learn to make friends with basil. I've heard of many ways of cutting basil to keep the edges from blackening, from slicing the leaves vertically to drawing the knife toward you as you cut. A sharp knife really does make all the difference: The less you mash, the less you'll damage the leaf. If it's appropriate for your recipe, and you have the time, gently tearing the leaves instead of cutting them is a nice alternative and seems to reduce blackening.



Slicing and mincing basil

FINE SHREDS: Stack leaves atop one another and roll into a tight tube. (For smaller leaves, bunch as tightly together as possible before cutting.) Cut the rolled leaves using a single swift, smooth stroke for each slice. The width is up to you. This is known as a "chiffonade."

MINCED: Turn the chiffonade slices (keeping them together with a gentle pinch) and make a few perpendicular cuts as wide or as narrow as you like.

Don't go back over the basil as you might when finely chopping parsley.



Flounder Poached in Coconut, Ginger & Basil Broth

Serves six.

- 6 skinless flounder fillets,
1 to 1½ pounds total
- Kosher salt
- Ground white pepper
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh
ginger (I use a rasp-style
grater)
- 1 cup roughly chopped
sweet basil or Thai basil
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
or extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large shallot, thinly
sliced (about ¼ cup)
- 1 2-inch piece fresh ginger,
peeled and cut into
matchsticks
- 2 cloves garlic, finely
minced
- 2 ribs celery, sliced ⅛ inch
thick on the diagonal
(about 2 cups)
- 1 small fresh hot red chile
(or jalapeño), sliced into
thin rings (seeds intact)
- 1 cup homemade or low-
salt chicken broth
- 5½-ounce can coconut
milk
- 4 scallions, thinly sliced
on the diagonal (about
1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime
juice
- 1 tablespoon mirin
(Japanese sweet rice
wine)
- 1 teaspoon finely grated
lime zest
- 1 cup jasmine rice, cooked



Spread the fillets on a work surface, skin side down. Season lightly with salt and white pepper. Divide the 1 tablespoon grated ginger among the fillets and spread as evenly as you can. Sprinkle about 1 tablespoon of the chopped basil over the fillets. Roll each fillet, starting at the thicker end. Secure each roll with a toothpick (or green scallion tops; see the tip at right). Sprinkle the rolls lightly with a little more salt and white pepper. Set aside.

In a small (4-quart) Dutch oven with a tight-fitting lid (or other heavy-duty pot just large enough to hold the fish snugly), heat the oil over high heat until it shimmers.

Add the shallot, ginger matchsticks, and garlic. Sauté for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add the celery and sauté for 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Add the chile and continue to sauté, stirring, until the celery starts to soften, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken broth and heat for 2 minutes. Turn off the heat and arrange the rolled fish in a single layer over the celery mixture. Pour the coconut milk over the fish and turn the heat to high. As soon as the coconut milk comes to a simmer, reduce the heat to medium low and cover. Simmer until the fish is opaque and cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes. If you're unsure, flake apart a section to see if it's done. Remove the pot from the heat.

Carefully transfer the fish with a slotted spoon or fish spatula to a small, warm platter.

Return the pot to high heat. Add the remaining basil, along with the scallions, fish sauce, lime juice, mirin, and lime zest. Bring the broth just to a simmer. Taste the broth and add more salt or mirin if needed.

For each serving, place a small mound of hot jasmine rice in a shallow bowl, top with a fish roll, and remove the toothpick. Ladle the hot broth over each fish roll and serve immediately.

Tip: Try tying the fillets with dark green scallion tops instead of using toothpicks. Dip the green tops in boiling water for 15 seconds so they're pliable and tie in a loose knot around the rolled fish fillets.



Grilled Corn & Tomato "Salad" with Basil Oil

Serves six to eight.

Serve with grilled bread, which could be brushed with basil oil before grilling.

2 ears corn, husks removed
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
3 to 4 large ripe beefsteak tomatoes
Basil Oil (see the recipe at right)
Small leaves of Dark Opal or Purple Ruffles basil, or gently torn larger ones, for garnish (optional)

Cut the corn cobs in half crosswise, put them in a large bowl, and toss with the olive oil, 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper.

Heat a grill to medium-high. Grill the corn until the tips of the kernels are

nicely browned all around, about 2 minutes on each of three sides. Return the corn to the bowl with the olive oil and toss again. When the ears are cool enough to handle, place the flat end of a cob on a cutting board so the cob is upright and slice the kernels off with a sharp knife. You should have about 1 cup kernels. Set aside until ready to assemble.

Slice the tomatoes 1/2 inch thick and generously season each slice with salt and pepper. On serving plates, arrange one, two, or three slices of tomato per person, depending on how big the tomatoes are. Scatter the corn over the tomato slices. Drizzle basil oil generously over each serving. Garnish with fresh purple leaves, if using.



Versatile basil condiments

Basil oil is perfect for those times when you want a hint of basil but don't want to overpower the flavors of summer's ripest batch of corn or tomatoes. Try:

- ❖ drizzling over just-grilled bread
- ❖ tossing with steamed green beans and sea salt
- ❖ pouring over a cold summer soup, like gazpacho

Basil Oil

Yields about 3/4 cup.

1 cup mild olive oil
2 cups tightly packed sweet basil leaves
Kosher salt

Put the measured oil in the refrigerator while you prepare the basil. Bring a pot of water to a boil. Have a bowl of ice water ready. Blanch the basil leaves in the boiling water for about 10 seconds. Remove them quickly with a strainer and dunk in the ice water, swishing them around to be sure they're all cold. Remove from the water and squeeze gently to remove the excess water.

Roughly chop the basil and put it in a blender. Add the oil and 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt; blend until the basil is puréed. The mixture will be very frothy. Let the purée settle for about 30 minutes. Strain through a cheesecloth-lined fine strainer, very gently pushing on the solids to extract the oil. Use immediately or refrigerate for up to a week. For the best flavor, let the oil come to room temperature before using.

Basil butter

is especially delicious made with sweet basil. I keep it on hand for adding a touch of basil flavor to just about anything. Try:

- ❖ tossing with cooked vegetables
- ❖ stirring into hot pasta, polenta, or mashed potatoes
- ❖ melting over grilled meats
- ❖ serving softened, with bread

Basil Butter

Yields 1/2 cup seasoned butter.

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened at room temperature
1/2 cup finely chopped sweet basil
1 teaspoon minced garlic
1/2 teaspoon freshly grated lemon zest
1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper
Kosher salt

In a bowl, combine the butter, basil, garlic, lemon zest, white pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt and mash with a spoon until well combined.

Use immediately as a spread for corn on the cob, grilled vegetables, or dinner rolls. Or use plastic wrap to shape the basil butter into a log, tightening the ends as if it were a sausage. Refrigerate until very firm. Slice into 1/4-inch-thick coins and melt over just-off-the-grill chicken or pork cutlets, fish fillets, or vegetables. The butter will keep in the refrigerator for up to two weeks or in the freezer for a month. This recipe can easily be doubled.

Formerly a Fine Cooking staffer, Jessica Bard is a cooking instructor and a freelance food writer and stylist. ♦

A Shortcut to Juicy Chicken

A few snips with kitchen shears and you have a chicken that cooks quickly and evenly

BY ELIZABETH KARMEL

I'm going to let you in on my secret weapon for making a whole chicken that's juicy, flavorful, and quick-cooking: It's a technique called butterflying, which means removing the backbone and flattening the chicken. This may sound scary or difficult, but believe me, it's easy to master. In fact, once you butterfly a chicken a few times, you'll be able to do it in just two or three minutes. I think kitchen shears work best for this technique, and they're also the safer way to go if you don't have master-chef knife

(Continued on p. 54)

Online video: See how to butterfly a chicken at finecooking.com



Snip

Using poultry shears, cut along each side of the backbone to remove it.



Press

Flip the chicken over, press firmly on the center of the breast, and break the breastbone.



Elizabeth Karmel says, "Once you've learned how to butterfly a chicken, go ahead and flavor it any way you like. Look to the recipes here for guidance, or try using your own favorite spice rubs, marinades, or sauces."

Yogurt-Marinated Butterflied Chicken

Serves four.

- 1 3½- to 4-pound chicken (I prefer organic)**
- Kosher salt**
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice (from 2 large lemons)**
- ½ cup fresh lime juice (from 2 to 3 large limes)**
- 2 cups plain whole-milk yogurt (about 1 pound)**
- 2 teaspoons coriander seeds, crushed**
- 8 medium cloves garlic, cut into slivers**
- 1 2-inch knob ginger, peeled and finely grated**

Butterfly the chicken as directed on the facing page.

Sprinkle both sides of the chicken evenly with 1½ tablespoons kosher salt. Put the chicken in a 9x13-inch Pyrex baking dish (or other large nonreactive baking dish) or a large zip-top plastic bag. Add the lemon juice and lime juice and turn to coat the chicken well. Cover and set aside at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine the yogurt, coriander, garlic, and ginger in a large, shallow, nonreactive bowl, and stir until the mixture is smooth and all of the seasonings are distributed evenly. Drain the excess citrus juice off the chicken but don't pat the chicken dry. Put the chicken in the bowl with the

yogurt marinade, coating the chicken on all sides and working the yogurt mixture under the breast and thigh skin as much as possible. Cover tightly and refrigerate for 2 to 4 hours. If necessary, turn the chicken occasionally so that all of the surfaces are coated evenly with the marinade.

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Just before cooking, remove the chicken from the marinade and discard the marinade. Don't wipe off the marinade that coats the chicken because it will keep the meat moist and form a delicious crust as it roasts. Set the chicken skin side up on a broiler pan or on a rack set inside a rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt. Tuck the wingtips under the breast. Roast until the juices run clear and the thigh registers 175° to 180°F, 45 to 55 minutes. Let the chicken rest for 10 minutes before cutting it into quarters and serving.

TO DRINK:

Look for a fairly rich, buttery Chardonnay to complement the spice and dairy elements in the marinade. Try the 2004 Chateau St. Jean Chardonnay, Sonoma County (\$15) or the 2004 Benziger Family Winery Chardonnay, Carneros (\$12).

skills. (To learn how to butterfly a chicken, see the photos on p. 52.)

A flattened chicken looks impressive, but looks aren't the only benefit to butterflying. Since the flat shape allows for more even heat distribution during cooking, a butterflied chicken cooks faster and stays juicier than a whole chicken. A butterflied chicken can also take on a world of flavors, because the flat surface lets any sauce, topping, or crust coat the skin evenly and stay on during cooking. As you'll see in the recipes here, I often marinate, sauce, or brine butterflied chicken before cooking, but it's delicious when prepared simply, too; just brush it with a little olive oil and sprinkle it with salt and pepper before roasting or grilling.



tip: Tuck the wingtips under the breast. This makes for a more compact package and keeps the wings from moving around during cooking.



Butterflied Chicken Dijon Grilled on a Bed of Thyme

Serves four.

1 3½- to 4-pound chicken (I prefer organic)
¼ cup Dijon mustard
2 scallions (both white and green parts), thinly sliced
2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
½ teaspoon dried herbes de Provence
¼ teaspoon paprika, preferably smoked sweet Spanish (pimentón)
Kosher salt
Extra-virgin olive oil, for brushing
4 bunches (about 2 ounces total) fresh thyme, soaked in water for at least 30 minutes

Butterfly the chicken as directed on p. 52.

Build a charcoal fire or heat a gas grill with all burners on high. For a charcoal grill, when the charcoal is covered with a white-gray ash, divide it into two piles and set a drip pan between the coals. For a gas grill, turn the burners that will be directly underneath the chicken off and the other burners to medium. (If your grill has only two burners, turn one off and set the other one at medium. You may need to rotate the chicken periodically so that both sides brown.)

In a medium bowl, combine the mustard, scallions, butter, herbes de Provence, paprika, and a large pinch of kosher salt; mix until smooth.

Brush the chicken all over with oil and season lightly on both sides with 1 teaspoon kosher salt. Run one or two fingers between the skin and flesh of the breasts, drumsticks, and thighs. Take care not to tear the skin.

Once the skin is loose, dip your hand in the mustard mixture and put a dollop under the skin. Smooth the skin to evenly distribute the mustard mixture. Repeat until you've used up the mixture and it's evenly distributed. Rub the mixture that remains on your hands evenly over the outside of the chicken. Remove any scallion pieces and put them back under the skin. Tuck the wingtips under the breast and refrigerate the chicken until ready to grill (or up to 4 hours ahead).

Just before cooking, remove the thyme from the water. Lay the bunches of wet thyme in one layer on the center (or not directly over the heat) of the grill grate to form a bed. Put the chicken, skin side up, on top of the thyme, cover, and cook until a thermometer inserted in the thigh registers 165° to 170°F, 30 to 35 minutes. Brush the chicken all over with a thin coating of olive oil, cover the grill, and continue cooking until a thermometer in the thigh reads 175° to 180°F, another 10 to 15 minutes.

Remove the chicken from the grill and discard the thyme. Let the chicken rest for 10 minutes before cutting it into quarters and serving.

TO DRINK:

Look for a Chardonnay with butter and spicy oak notes, like the 2003 Buehler, Russian River Valley (\$14), or a medium-bodied supple Pinot Noir, like the 2004 Hahn Estates, Monterey County (\$18).

Beer-Brined Butterflied Chicken

Serves four.

1 3½- to 4-pound chicken (I prefer organic)
¾ cup plus ½ teaspoon kosher salt
¾ cup plus ½ teaspoon packed dark brown sugar
1 tablespoon plus ¼ teaspoon freshly ground coarse black pepper
6 bay leaves, crumbled
2 12-ounce cans or bottles cold lager beer (like Budweiser)
1 teaspoon smoked sweet Spanish paprika (pimentón)
½ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon celery salt
¼ teaspoon chili powder
Large pinch dried oregano, crushed
Pinch cayenne
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Butterfly the chicken as directed on p. 52.

In a large bowl, combine the ¾ cup kosher salt, ¾ cup brown sugar, 1 tablespoon pepper, and bay leaves. Add 4 cups very hot water and stir to dissolve the salt and sugar. Add the beer and stir well to remove the carbonation. Add about 4 cups ice cubes to cool the brine rapidly. When the ice has melted and the brine is cool, put the chicken in the brine, adding more cold water if needed to cover. Refrigerate, covered, for 2 to 4 hours.

In a small bowl, mix the ½ teaspoon kosher salt, ½ teaspoon brown sugar, and ¼ teaspoon pepper with the paprika, cumin, celery salt, chili powder, oregano, and cayenne.

Remove the chicken from the brine and let it air dry for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, build

a charcoal fire or heat a gas grill with all burners on high. For a charcoal grill, when the charcoal is covered with a white-gray ash, divide it into two piles and set a drip pan between the coals. For a gas grill, turn the burners that will be directly underneath the chicken off and the other burners to medium. (If your grill has only two burners, turn one off and set the other one at medium. You may need to rotate the chicken periodically so that both sides brown.)

When ready to cook, if the chicken is still very wet, blot it dry with paper towels. Brush or rub both sides of the chicken with the oil and sprinkle with the spice mixture. Tuck the wingtips under the breast. Set the chicken, skin side up, in the center of the grill (or not directly over the heat). Cover and cook until the juices run clear and a meat thermometer in the thickest part of the thigh registers 175° to 180°F, 40 to 50 minutes. Let the chicken rest for 10 minutes before cutting it into quarters and serving.

TO DRINK:

Try a fruit-forward red wine with spice elements and moderate oak and tannins, like the Rosenblum Cellars Vintners Cuvée XXVIII Zinfandel, California (\$9.50), the 2004 Bogle Winery Old Vines Zinfandel, California (\$12), the 2004 Deakin Estate Shiraz, Victoria (\$12), or the 2003 d'Arenberg "The Footbolt" Shiraz, McLaren Vale (\$17).

For ideas on how to use leftover butterflied chicken, see *From Our Test Kitchen*, p. 76.



A butterflied chicken is a breeze to carve

A butterflied chicken is a lot easier to carve than a whole one. Just use your kitchen shears (or a sharp chef's knife) to cut the chicken into halves or quarters. (For information on where to find kitchen shears, see *Where to Buy It*, p. 84.)



Elizabeth Karmel is the author of Taming the Flame: Secrets for Hot-and-Quick Grilling and Low-and-Slow BBQ. ♦

Chopped Salads

A funny thing happens when you chop ingredients into small pieces. Not only does the texture change, but the flavor changes, too. Think of the difference between a shaving of hard cheese versus a large chunk. Chances are the shaved piece tastes more interesting, more complex. Well, I think the same is true of salad ingredients, which is why I'm a big fan of chopped salads. Each ingredient is more interesting to eat and taste, and together they combine to give you something even better.

Chopped salads are a beautiful way of showing off summer's terrific produce. I'll

often let a visit to the farmers' market tell me what I'm going to chop up that day. What's more, chopped salads can mostly be made ahead, with components stored separately, then arranged and dressed at the last moment before serving.

Now, it's no secret that chopped salads require a good bit of—you guessed it—chopping. But I guarantee the nuances of flavor and intriguing textural variations you'll get with each bite will more than reward you for the time spent at the cutting board. It's a good idea to have a sharp knife handy, one that's comfortable for you. I like to chop the different ingredi-

ents into small dice, keeping the size roughly uniform for all, which makes the salad both visually appealing and easy to eat (big cubes or chunks can be awkward).

I'm partial to composing my chopped salads by arranging each ingredient in separate piles or stripes on the serving platter before drizzling the dressing, as opposed to tossing everything together. I feel that when you toss a salad, each mouthful is the same, and I can't help but think that the experience would be more interesting if I could taste each ingredient separately or create my own combinations of flavor and texture right on my plate.



Intriguing textures and different flavors in every bite

BY JOHN ASH



Chopped Mexican Salad with Roasted Peppers, Corn, Tomatoes & Avocado

Serves eight.

FOR THE PEPPERS AND CORN:

- 2 large orange or red bell peppers**
- 2 ears fresh corn**
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

FOR THE HONEY-LIME-CUMIN VINAIGRETTE:

- 1 small clove garlic**
- Kosher salt**
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice**
- 3 tablespoons fresh orange juice**
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped shallot**
- 1 tablespoon honey; more to taste**
- ¾ teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and finely ground**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- Freshly ground black pepper**

TO ASSEMBLE:

- 2 large firm-ripe tomatoes, cored, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch dice (about 1¾ cup)**
- 1 small jicama, peeled and cut into ¼-inch dice (2 cups)**
- 2 large firm-ripe avocados, peeled, pitted, and cut into ¼-inch dice (about 2½ cups)**
- 1 15-ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed (or 1½ cups home-cooked black beans)**
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro**

Roast the peppers and corn:

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 425°F. Line a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with foil. Cut the peppers in half lengthwise and remove the stem, seed core, and ribs. Put the pepper halves on the baking sheet cut side down. Husk the corn and put the ears on the baking sheet. Drizzle the oil over the peppers and corn and rub it around to coat the pepper skins and corn kernels evenly. Sprinkle the corn with salt and pepper. Roast in the oven

until the peppers are soft and slightly shriveled and browned and the corn kernels are lightly browned in a few spots, about 20 minutes (rotate the corn occasionally as it roasts).

When the vegetables are done, let them rest until cool enough to handle. Scrape away the pepper skin and cut the flesh into ½-inch dice. Cut the corn kernels from the cob. You should have about 1½ cups kernels.

Make the vinaigrette: Mince and mash the garlic to a paste with ¼ teaspoon kosher salt. In a medium bowl, whisk the garlic paste with the lime and orange juices, shallot, honey, and toasted ground cumin. Slowly add the oil in a thin stream, whisking until well blended. Season to taste with black pepper and more salt and honey, if you like.

Assemble the salad: Artfully arrange the corn, tomatoes, peppers, jicama, avocado, and black beans in stripes or piles on a small platter or other wide, shallow serving dish. Sprinkle with the chopped cilantro. Serve the vinaigrette in a pitcher. Encourage guests to spoon elements of the salad onto their plates and drizzle on some of the vinaigrette. Or drizzle the vinaigrette over the salad platter just before serving.

Chop all the salad ingredients up to four hours ahead and store them separately covered in the fridge.

Chopped Greek Salad with Garlic Croutons

Serves six to eight.

Bread salads are famous in both Italy (panzanella) and the Middle East (fattoush). Sometimes the bread component is mixed in ahead to soak up the vegetable juices; other times, the bread is added at the last moment, so it keeps some of its texture, as in this recipe.

FOR THE GARLIC CROUTONS:

3 cups $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch bread cubes (cut from day-old sturdy bread with crusts removed)

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

2 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE DRESSING:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fragrant extra-virgin olive oil

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup red- or white-wine vinegar (or fresh lemon juice)

2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano

1 teaspoon mashed oil-packed anchovies (2 to 4 fillets), or to taste

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

TO ASSEMBLE:

4 cups gently packed baby arugula, washed and dried

3 medium firm-ripe tomatoes, cored, seeded, and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch dice (about 2 cups)

1 medium English cucumber, seeded and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch dice (about 2 cups)

1 cup meaty black olives, preferably Cerignola or Kalamata, pitted and quartered

8 ounces firm feta, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch dice (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups)

Make the garlic croutons: Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Put the bread cubes in a large bowl. In a small saucepan, heat the oil and garlic over medium heat until the garlic just begins to color, 3 to 5 minutes. Be careful the garlic doesn't burn or it will become bitter. Pour the oil through a strainer onto the bread cubes. Toss until the cubes are evenly coated with oil (discard

the garlic). Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and toast the bread in the oven, flipping occasionally, until it's nicely golden on all sides, about 12 minutes. The croutons should be toasty on the surface but still somewhat soft in the middle. Return them to the large bowl and, while still warm, toss them with parsley, lemon zest, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt, and a few grinds of pepper.

Make the dressing: In a medium bowl, whisk the olive oil with the vinegar, shallots, mustard, oregano, and anchovies. Add salt and pepper to taste. Let sit for at least 10 minutes to let the flavors blend.

Assemble the salad: Lay the arugula on a large platter and artfully arrange the tomatoes, cucumber, olives, feta, and croutons in stripes or piles on top of the arugula. Whisk the dressing

to recombine and serve it in a pitcher. Encourage guests to spoon elements of the salad onto their plates and drizzle on some of the dressing. Or drizzle the dressing over the salad platter just before serving. You may not need all of the dressing.

Remember that a bread salad is only as good as the bread that goes into it.



Chopped Shrimp “Waldorf” Salad

Serves six to eight.

The original Waldorf salad was created at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York in the late 1890s by Chef Oscar Tschirky. It was considered the height of sophistication and originally was nothing more than apples, celery, and mayonnaise. Chopped nuts and grapes came later. My version features shrimp.

1 pound large shrimp (31-40 count), peeled and deveined
½ cup mayonnaise
⅓ cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice; more to taste
1 tablespoon roughly chopped fresh tarragon
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups ¼-inch-diced sweet apples, preferably Fuji (about 1½ apples)
2 cups red seedless grapes, halved
1½ cups ¼-inch-diced celery (3 to 4 ribs)
⅓ cup blanched slivered almonds, lightly toasted
1 tablespoon thinly sliced chives (optional)
12 tender butter lettuce leaves

Put the shrimp in a steamer basket over simmering water and steam until just cooked through, about 3 minutes (the center should still be slightly translucent). Let cool.

In a medium bowl, whisk the mayonnaise, buttermilk, lemon juice, tarragon, and mustard.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cut the shrimp into ½-inch pieces and mix in a large bowl with the apples, grapes, celery, and almonds. Toss with enough of the dressing to coat the ingredients well (you may not need it all). Taste and add more salt, pepper, or lemon juice as needed. Sprinkle with the chives, if using. Serve the salad on beds of lettuce leaves or put the leaves next to the salad and have guests spoon some of the salad into a leaf and roll it up to eat out of hand.

With this salad,
I break my own
rule and toss
everything together
so the dressing
coats each of the
components.

John Ash is an award-winning cookbook author and the founder and chef of John Ash & Co., a restaurant in Santa Rosa, California. ♦



Making the

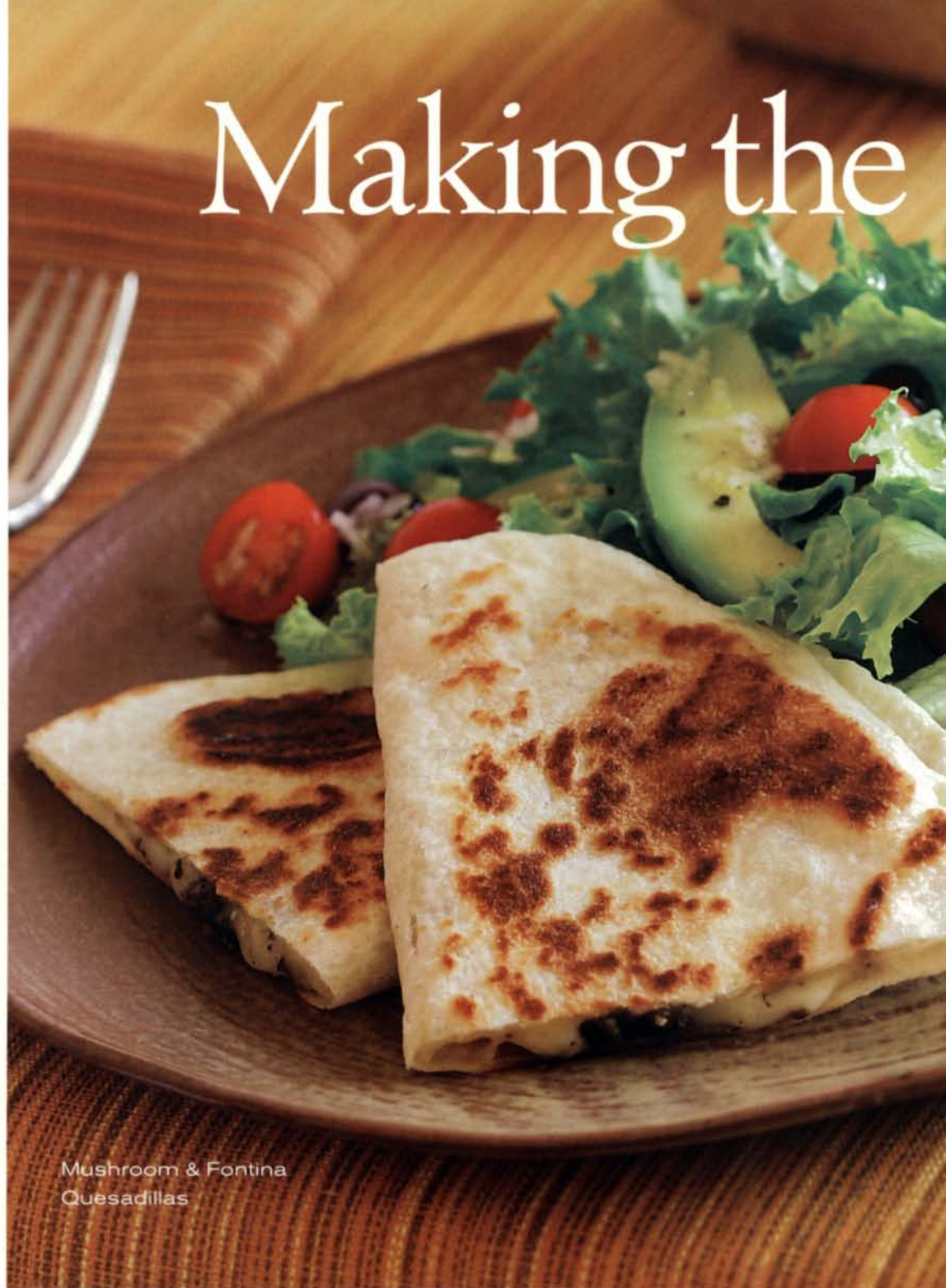
BY LAURA WERLIN

When I was in college, I discovered that quesadillas were pretty much the perfect food. They were easy to make, cheap, and best of all, oozing with melted cheese, which I craved, particularly when final exams rolled around. My college version of a quesadilla was soft and floppy because I cooked it in a microwave. But I've since discovered a few simple tricks that make quesadillas golden, crisp, and completely irresistible.

Use a nonstick skillet. The best quesadilla is one with a perfectly crisp tortilla, a texture that comes from pan-cooking. I like using a nonstick skillet, which will turn out perfectly golden quesadillas every time. (A well-seasoned cast-iron skillet will work well, too.) Be sure to cover the quesadillas during the first half of cooking, which ensures that the cheese melts and the filling heats through.

The filling should be cheesy, but don't limit yourself to just one cheese. A combination like the one in the Three-Cheese Quesadillas on p. 62 is as good as it gets. Grating the cheese will yield better results, as it melts faster, which means you're less likely to burn the tortilla before the filling is heated through.

For a snack-time quesadilla, I use cheese plus one or two other ingredients to keep it from becoming too filling, but if I'm having quesadillas as a meal, I go to



Mushroom & Fontina
Quesadillas

town, combining many ingredients. The possibilities are limitless, so feel free to experiment (see the sidebar opposite).

Stick to flour tortillas. Flour tortillas are more pliable than corn tortillas, so they're easier to fold once filled. Also, size matters. Nine- or ten-inch tortillas, sometimes labeled "burrito size," are small enough to flip easily in the pan but large

enough to make into a meal or cut into appetizer-size portions.

Use butter, not oil. Rather than cooking quesadillas in oil, I spread butter on the tortillas for a richer flavor. As a rule, I use salted butter, which provides the best flavor boost. But sometimes I mix the butter with a little grated hard cheese, and in that case, I use unsalted butter so the quesadilla doesn't get too salty.

do ahead:

You can assemble the Mushroom & Fontina and Three-Cheese Quesadillas about 2 hours before cooking; the Mozzarella, Tomato & Basil version can be made 30 minutes ahead. Lay the quesadillas in one layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment, cover with plastic, and refrigerate.

Best Quesadillas

Crisp on the outside, melty on the inside—
a few tricks guarantee perfect results



tip: Use 9- or 10-inch flour tortillas, often labeled "burrito size."



tip: Spread butter on the outside of the tortillas to add flavor.



tip: Grate the cheese to help it melt quickly.



tip: Fold to encase the filling and keep the ingredients from overflowing.

Mushroom & Fontina Quesadillas

Serves four as a main course; eight to twelve as an hors d'oeuvre.

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 ounces white button or cremini mushrooms, coarsely chopped (about 2 ½ cups)
- 2 small cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ tablespoons fresh thyme leaves, finely chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons salted butter, at room temperature
- 4 9- or 10-inch flour tortillas (burrito size)
- 8 ounces Fontina, coarsely grated (about 2 cups)

Position a rack in the center of the oven; heat the oven to 200°F.

In a 10- or 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat the oil over medium-high until hot. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until they release most of their juices and are slightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic, thyme, ½ teaspoon kosher salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning as needed. Transfer the mushrooms to a medium bowl.

Spread the butter on one side of each tortilla and set the tortillas on a work surface, buttered side down. Distribute the Fontina among the tortillas, covering only half of each and leaving a 1-inch margin at the edge. Distribute the mushrooms on top of the cheese. Fold the tortillas in half to enclose the filling, creating a half-moon.

Wipe out the skillet with a paper towel. Over medium heat, cook two of the quesadillas, covered, until golden brown, about 4 minutes. Uncover and flip the quesadillas. Cook until the second side is golden brown and the cheese has melted completely, about 2 minutes. Transfer the quesadillas to the oven to keep warm and repeat with the remaining two quesadillas. (You can hold the cooked quesadillas in the warm oven for up to 30 minutes.) Cut the quesadillas in half (or smaller wedges if serving as an hors d'oeuvre) and serve.

Three-Cheese Quesadillas with Garlic Butter

Serves four as a main course; eight to twelve as an hors d'oeuvre.

- 2 small cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 2 tablespoons salted butter, at room temperature
- 8 ounces Monterey Jack, coarsely grated (2 cups)
- 1¼ ounces finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano (½ cup)
- 4 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled (¾ cup)
- 4 9- or 10-inch flour tortillas (burrito size)

Position a rack in the center of the oven; heat the oven to 200°F.

In a small pot, bring 2 cups water to a boil over high heat. Add the garlic cloves and cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Drain the garlic, let it cool slightly, peel, and put it in a small bowl. With a fork, mash the garlic to a coarse paste and then add the butter and mix well.

In a medium bowl, combine the Monterey Jack, Parmigiano, and goat cheese. Spread the garlic butter on one side of each tortilla and set the tortillas on a work surface, buttered side down. Distribute the cheese mixture among the tortillas, covering only half of each and leaving a 1-inch margin at the edge. Fold the tortillas in half to enclose the filling, creating a half-moon.

In a 10- or 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat, cook two of the quesadillas, covered, until golden brown, about 4 minutes. Uncover and flip the quesadillas. Cook until the second side is golden brown and the cheese has melted completely, about 2 minutes. Transfer the quesadillas to the oven to keep warm and repeat with the remaining two quesadillas. (You can hold the cooked quesadillas in the warm oven for up to 30 minutes.) Cut the quesadillas in half (or smaller wedges if serving as an hors d'oeuvre) and serve.



Above: Three-Cheese Quesadillas with Garlic Butter. At right: Mozzarella, Tomato & Basil Quesadillas with Parmesan Crust

Mozzarella, Tomato & Basil Quesadillas with Parmesan Crust

Serves four as a main course; eight to twelve as an hors d'oeuvre.

- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 ounce finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano (½ cup)
- 4 9- or 10-inch flour tortillas (burrito size)
- 8 ounces mozzarella (see note), coarsely grated (about 2 cups)
- 2 medium tomatoes (about ¾ pound total), seeded and coarsely chopped (about 1 cup)
- ½ cup coarsely chopped fresh basil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Position a rack in the center of the oven; heat the oven to 200°F.

In a small bowl, mix the butter and Parmigiano. Spread this on one side of each tortilla and set the tortillas on a work surface, buttered side down. Distribute the mozzarella among the tortillas, covering only half of each and leaving a 1-inch margin at the edge. Follow with the tomatoes and basil, and sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon each kosher salt and pepper. Fold the tortillas in half to enclose the filling, creating a half-moon.

In a 10- or 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat, cook two of the quesadillas, covered, until golden brown on the first side, about 3 minutes. Uncover, flip, and cook until the second



side is golden brown and the cheese has melted completely, about 2 minutes. (Watch carefully as the Parmigiano crust can burn easily; lower the heat if it's getting too dark.) Transfer the quesadillas to the oven to keep warm and repeat with the remaining two quesadillas. (You can hold the cooked quesadillas in the warm oven for up to 30 minutes.) Cut the quesadillas in half (or in smaller wedges if serving as an hors d'oeuvre) and serve.

Note: Water-packed mozzarella is a fresh style and should be bought and consumed within a few days. It doesn't grate very well, so just cut it into small pieces. Vacuum-sealed mozzarella is usually much drier and can be easily grated.

Creating your own quesadillas

The best base cheeses for quesadillas are good melters—those that are relatively high in moisture, rather than drier, aged ones. Fresh cheeses like ricotta and goat cheese also work well in combination with melting cheeses. Once you've chosen your cheeses, try adding some of the other ingredients here. (Remember that raw seafood and meat must be cooked before becoming part of the filling.)

choice cheeses:

Good melting cheeses

Asiago (not aged)
Blue
Brie
Colby
Cheddar
Fontina
Gouda (not aged)
Gruyère
Havarti
Manchego
Monterey Jack
Mozzarella
Pecorino (not aged)
Provolone
Queso Oaxaca
Swiss
Teleme

Fresh cheeses to use in combination with melting cheeses

Goat cheese
Feta
Fromage blanc
Ricotta

Laura Werlin has written several books about cheese, including Great Grilled Cheese: 50 Innovative Recipes for Stovetop, Grill, and Sandwich Maker. ♦

filling ideas:

From the produce aisle

Baby arugula
Baby spinach
Eggplant, diced and cooked
Fresh corn, cooked
Mushrooms, sliced and cooked
Tomatoes, diced

From a jar or can

Black beans, drained
Chiles (canned, or fresh and roasted), chopped
Oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and thinly sliced
Olives, pitted and slivered
Roasted red peppers, thinly sliced

Cooked meats (cut in ½-inch-wide pieces or shredded)

Chicken
Pork tenderloin
Steak (flank or skirt)

Cured meats

Bacon or pancetta, cooked and crumbled or diced
Prosciutto, thinly sliced

Cooked seafood

Crabmeat, in pieces
Shrimp, chopped
Squid, sliced

Aromatics, herbs & spices

Crushed red pepper flakes
Fresh herbs, chopped
Garlic, chopped and sautéed
Leeks, chopped and sautéed
Onions or shallots, chopped and sautéed
Scallions, chopped
Smoked paprika

A Fresh Asian Salad

Drizzle a vibrant sauce over cool noodles, grilled pork patties, and crunchy greens

BY THAI MORELAND

Whenever I go back to Vietnam, as soon as I step off the plane I can practically smell and taste the enticing aromas and flavors of the country's amazing street food.

My favorite is *bún chả*, a specialty of Hanoi sold by street vendors in the city's bustling open-air markets. Bún chả is a refreshing salad made with cool, tender rice noodles and crisp lettuce topped with grilled pork patties and a generous ladling of a mildly hot sweet-and-sour sauce called *nuoc cham*. Traditionally, bún chả is savored on the street or in a market at small food stalls ringed with narrow counters and tiny plastic chairs on which diners sit shoulder to shoulder, hunched over their brimming bowls of food. But it's also a dish the Vietnamese make at home when they want something light and delicious that's easy to put together.

Nuoc cham, the dipping sauce that accompanies bún chả, is an important part of Vietnamese cuisine, and it's critical to the success of this dish. A well-made nuoc cham relies on a perfect balance of salty, sweet, sour, and hot flavors. It's a classic Vietnamese sauce that's served at the table with almost every meal; you'll find it accompanying spring rolls, grilled meats, and noodle dishes. You can dip food in it or drizzle it over a dish.

Bún chả is traditionally served with an abundance of fresh herbs. In Vietnam, we use red shiso or perilla (heart-shaped leaves with a serrated edge and pungent flavor), sawtooth cilantro (sturdier and with a heartier, more complex taste than regular cilantro), and mint. But the dish is just as good if you use herbs that are commonly available here, like regular cilantro and mint.

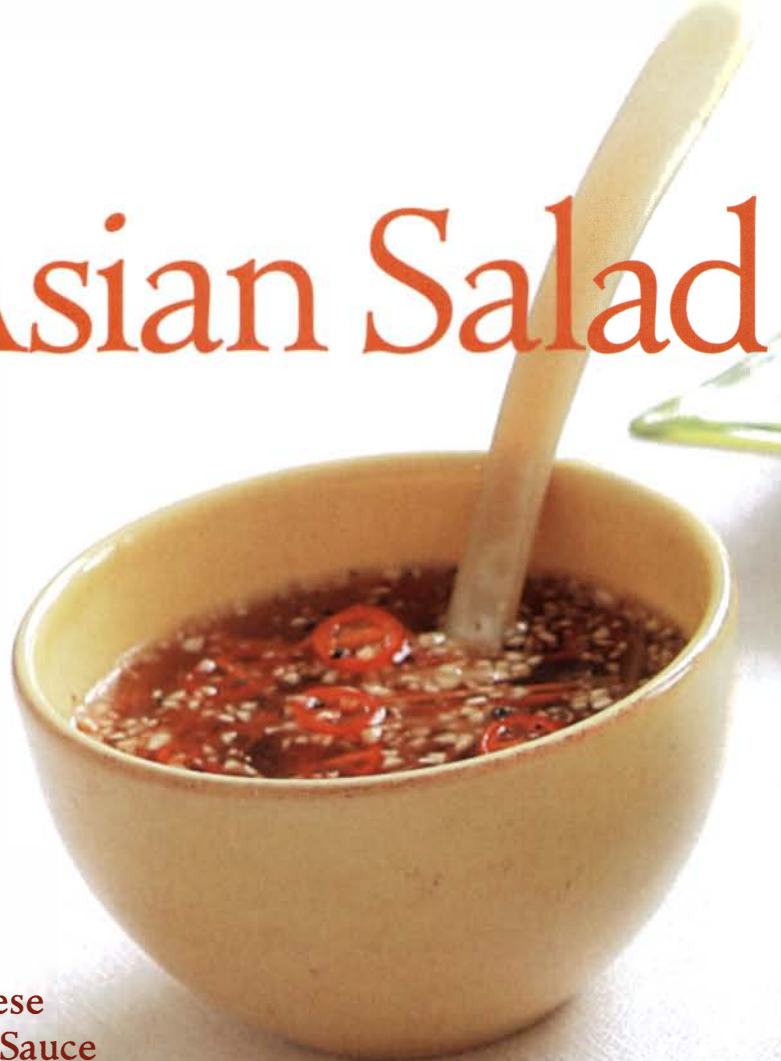
Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (Nuoc Cham)

Yields 2¼ cups.

The sauce keeps for two weeks in the refrigerator.

3 large cloves garlic, minced
1 hot red chile, such as serrano, thinly sliced
1 cup water
½ cup fish sauce
½ cup red-wine vinegar
½ cup granulated sugar

Stir all the ingredients in a medium bowl. Set aside.



A well-made nuoc cham has a good balance of four flavors common to Southeast Asian food.

SALTY
fish sauce

SOUR
vinegar

SWEET
sugar

HOT
chiles



Vietnamese Noodle Salad with Pork Patties (Bún Cha)

Serves two to three.

8 or 9 ounces rice vermicelli noodles (thin rice sticks)
Kosher salt
½ cup very thin carrot strips (julienne)
½ cup very thin daikon radish or jicama strips (julienne) (for more on daikon, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 78)
3 teaspoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon red-wine vinegar
Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (nuoc cham; recipe at left)
1 pound ground pork (ask the butcher for coarsely ground pork butt)
5 small or 4 large scallions, thinly sliced
1½ teaspoons fish sauce
Freshly ground black pepper
6 large leaves romaine lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
1 cup roughly chopped fresh mint
1 cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro

Soak the rice vermicelli in a large bowl of warm water for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, bring about 2 quarts water and 1 teaspoon kosher salt to a boil in a large saucepan over high heat. Drain the noodles and add them to the boiling water, stirring with chopsticks to gently separate the strands. When the water returns to a boil (after about 2 minutes), drain the noodles in a colander (push the strands against the sides of the colander with chopsticks to help them drain completely). Put the noodles on a platter and fluff them with chopsticks. Set aside until cool, at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.

Put the carrots and daikon or jicama in a colander. Sprinkle on 1 teaspoon of the sugar, the vinegar, and ¼ teaspoon

kosher salt and mix well. Let the colander sit in the sink for 10 minutes, and then gently squeeze the vegetables to get rid of the liquid. Add the vegetables to the bowl of dipping sauce.

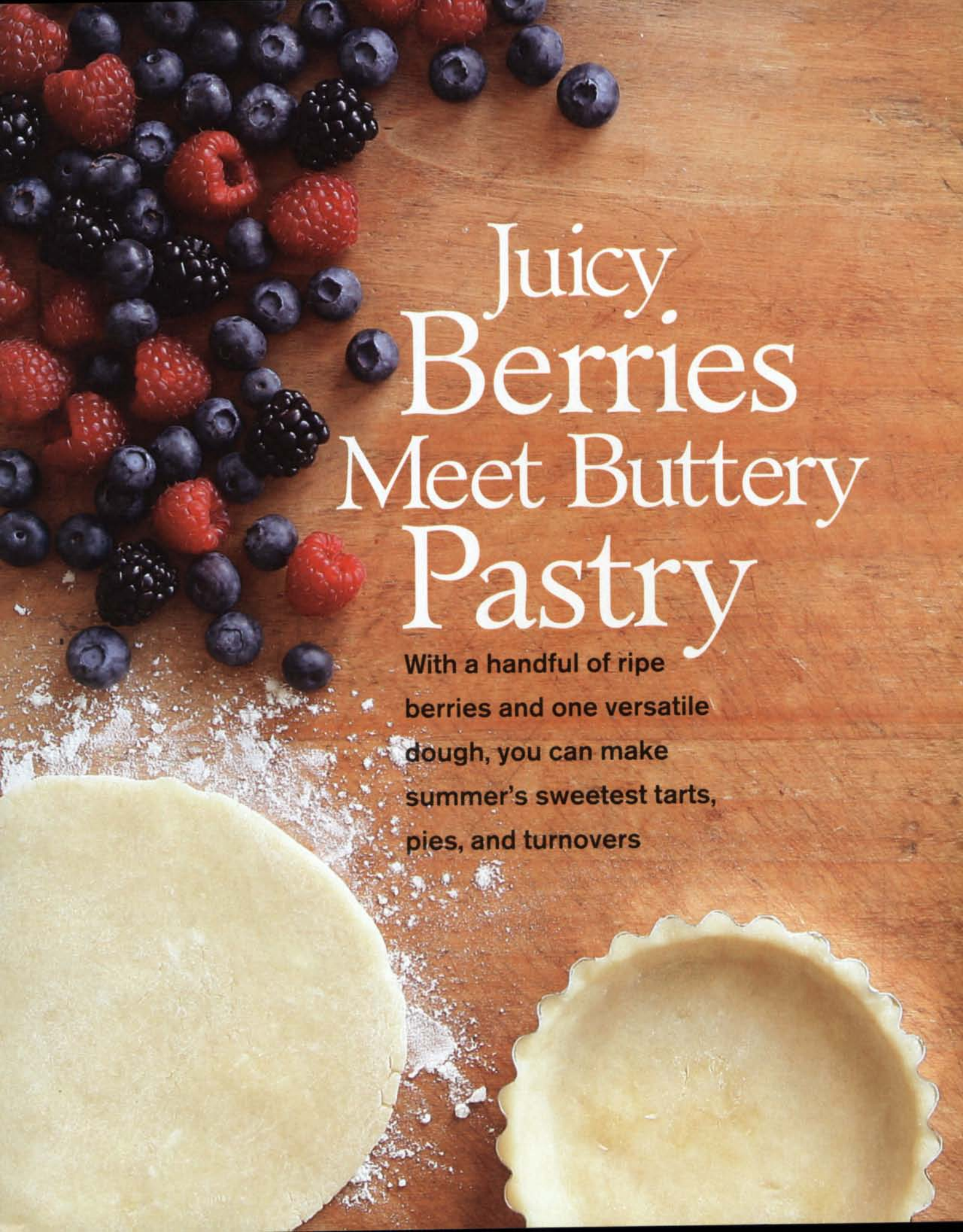
Put the pork in a bowl. Add the scallions, the remaining 2 teaspoons sugar, the fish sauce, ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt, and ⅛ teaspoon pepper and mix gently with your hands. Shape the meat into small patties about 2 inches wide and ¾ inch thick; you should have ten patties.

Grill the patties over a medium-hot gas or charcoal grill, (or in an oiled grill pan or skillet over medium-high heat) until they're well browned outside and cooked through but still moist inside, 8 to 10 minutes on a grill; 15 minutes on a grill pan (cut into one to check—it's fine if the

pork is still a little pink inside). Add the cooked patties, still warm, to the bowl of sauce and vegetables and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

Serve the noodles on the platter, along with the lettuce, mint, and cilantro. Remove the pork patties from the sauce and put them on a different platter. Give everyone a large bowl and let people serve themselves noodles, lettuce, and herbs, then top that with pork patties and a generous drizzle of the dipping sauce and the vegetables in it. Toss gently.

Thai Moreland was born and raised in Vietnam. She now lives in New York City. ♦



Juicy Berries Meet Buttery Pastry

With a handful of ripe
berries and one versatile
dough, you can make
summer's sweetest tarts,
pies, and turnovers

BY JANIE HIBLER

I've lived in berry country my entire life, and there's nothing I love more than juicy, in-season berries. Well, all right, maybe there is one thing—and that's rich, buttery pastries made with juicy, in-season berries.

When I was a child in northern California, luscious berry desserts were always served at the end of summer meals. Now that I'm the one in charge of dessert, I find myself turning to a few choice recipes time and again. Conveniently, they all begin with the same delicious crust (see the recipe

on p. 68). It's my absolute favorite pastry recipe: It has the buttery, melt-in-your-mouth tenderness of a shortbread cookie, and it has also proven to be exceptionally versatile. With slight adaptations, you can use the dough to make individual mixed-berry tarts, little raspberry turnovers, or a scrumptious pie filled

with a jumble of sweet berries.

All you

(Continued on p. 68)



need to make these recipes sing is ripe, juicy berries (locally grown, if possible).

Truly flavorful berries are a singular summer pleasure

In summer, I like to pick my own berries. I'm lucky: In the Northwest, we have lots of "pick-your-own" farms. Check around in your area; you might have them, too. Farmers' markets are also a great source for fresh-picked berries. But if supermarket berries are all you can find, don't worry—you can use them in the recipes that follow and still get fabulous results.

How to handle fresh berries: When buying berries, avoid baskets with berry stains, which indicate overripe fruit. Look for unblemished strawberries with shiny red flesh and fresh green caps; blueberries should practically burst with plumpness; and raspberries and blackberries should be stemless, without any dry, brown spots. (Stems indicate that the berries were picked unripe, and they'll never get any sweeter off the bush.)

When you bring berries home, spread them out unwashed on a paper-towel-lined baking sheet and store in the refrigerator. The paper towels absorb moisture and help prevent molding. It's best not to rinse berries until just before using.

Stock up on in-season berries now and freeze some for later

In berry season, I always find myself with more berries than I can possibly use at the moment. Luckily, berries freeze well. In the off-season, there's nothing like having a stash of frozen berries. And fragile berries like raspberries work better when added frozen to cake or muffin batters because freezing firms up their flesh and prevents their juices from bleeding.

How to freeze berries: Pour them into a colander and spray with cold water. Give them a gentle shake and transfer to a paper-towel-lined baking sheet. Thoroughly pat dry with another paper towel. You can transfer blueberries right into zip-top freezer bags and pop them in the freezer. But freeze strawberries, blackberries, and raspberries on the baking sheet before transferring them to freezer bags, so they don't stick together. Freeze in 1- to 4-cup batches and label the bags with the fruit name, amount, and date.

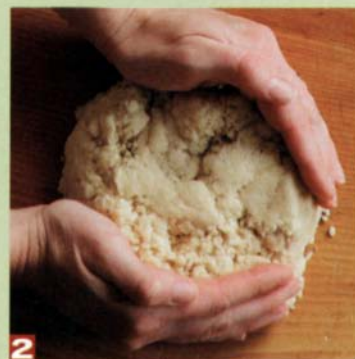
Buttery Shortbread Pastry Dough

Yields enough dough for 1 single pie crust, 8 mini tarts, or 12 turnovers.

This versatile dough can be used for everything from tarts to turnovers. The dough is quite soft, but all the butter in the recipe makes it forgiving and easy to work with. When baked, the crust is very tender—almost like a shortbread cookie.

- 9 ounces (2 cups) bleached all-purpose flour**
- 7 ounces (14 tablespoons) chilled unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch pieces**
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten**
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar**
- 1 tablespoon chilled heavy cream**
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice**
- 1 teaspoon table salt**

In a food processor, combine the flour, butter, egg, sugar, cream, lemon juice, and salt and pulse until the dough starts gathering together in big clumps. **1** Turn the dough out onto a counter and gather it together. **2** Shape the dough as directed in the berry dessert recipe you're making.



Easiest Berry Sauce

Yields ¾ cup sauce.

When you have more berries than you can possibly use, make this easy sauce. Drizzle it over cakes or ice cream, or stir into seltzer, lemonade, or sparkling wine.

- 1 pint (2 cups) fresh raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, or a mixture, rinsed and drained; or frozen berries, thawed with juice**
- ¼ to ½ cup granulated sugar, to taste (for tips on adjusting sugar, see p. 70)**
- 1 to 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice**

Put the berries, ¼ cup sugar, and 1 teaspoon lemon juice in a food processor or a blender and purée until smooth. Taste the sauce and adjust with more sugar or lemon juice or both, as needed. If the berries are seedy, pass the sauce through a sieve by pushing with the back of a spoon. This sauce will keep, covered, for up to a week in the refrigerator.

reader review

A *Fine Cooking* reader gave this recipe a real-world test. Here are the results:

"The bumbleberry pie was a clear winner with my husband and daughter; they both thought it had great berry flavor. The crust was my daughter's favorite part—it was very simple to prepare, sturdy enough to stand up to all the berry juice, and stayed crisp even after a few days in the refrigerator. We also liked the ease of the berry sauce; I made it in the morning to accompany our Belgian waffles."

—Robin Hart,
North Brunswick, New Jersey

Mixed Berry Tarts with Lemony Filling

Yields eight 4¾-inch tarts.

You can decorate these delicious tarts with berries before serving them, or set out dishes of berries and let guests garnish their own tarts with the berries of their choice.

1 recipe Buttery Shortbread Pastry Dough (facing page)

½ cup heavy cream

1 cup Lemon Curd (see the recipe below)

1 cup each fresh raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries or boysenberries (rinsed, picked over, and dried) placed in separate bowls

Have ready eight 4¾-inch fluted tart pans with removable bottoms (for sources, see p. 84).

Working quickly, shape the dough into an 8-inch log and divide it into eight equal pieces. On a lightly floured surface, roll a piece of dough into a 5-inch round. Gently press the dough into a tart pan. Repeat with the remaining dough. Put the tarts on a baking sheet and chill in the refrigerator for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 400°F.

Cut out eight roughly 6-inch-square pieces of foil and spray one side lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Line each tart with a square of foil, oiled side down, being sure to gently fold the foil over the top edge of the tart. Place a handful of pie weights, raw rice, or dried beans into each lined tart. Transfer the tarts (still on the baking sheet) to the oven and bake until the crust turns golden brown and starts to pull away from the sides of the pans, 25 to 30 minutes. (Check the color by carefully lifting up the foil on a few of the tarts.) Let the tarts cool on the baking sheet on a rack for 5 minutes. Carefully remove the lining and weights. Let cool completely on the baking sheet on the rack.

In a medium bowl, whip the cream to soft peaks. Add the lemon curd and gently fold together with a rubber spatula until combined. Divide the mixture among the pastry shells and smooth the filling with a spatula or the back of a spoon. The filling should be no higher than the edge of the tart shell. Carefully remove the outer rings and bottoms of the tart shells (use a metal spatula for the bottoms) and arrange the tarts on a large platter. Top each tart with a mixture of raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries and serve immediately.

Make-ahead tips: The lemon curd can be made ahead and stored, covered, for up to a week in the refrigerator. You can combine the lemon curd and whipped cream and hold the filling for about 2 hours in the fridge. The shells can be baked a day ahead (store the cooled shells in an airtight container); fill them shortly before serving. The baked shells also freeze well; thaw before filling.



Lemon Curd

Yields about 1¾ cups.

This recipe makes more than you need for the tarts at left, but once you taste this lemon curd, I suspect the leftovers will disappear before you know it.

3 large eggs

⅔ cup granulated sugar

½ cup fresh lemon juice (from about 2 large lemons)

6 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest

In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs until well blended. Combine the sugar, lemon juice, butter, and lemon zest in a small (1- to 2-quart) saucepan. Gently heat over medium-low heat until the butter has melted. Don't let the mixture come

to a boil. Remove the pan from the heat and whisk the lemon mixture into the beaten eggs. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and cook gently over medium-low heat, stirring constantly with the whisk, until the mixture thickens and reaches at least 160°F, about 5 minutes. Again, don't let the mixture boil. Let the lemon curd cool briefly before transferring it to a heatproof container. Press a piece of plastic wrap onto the surface of the curd and poke a few holes in it with the tip of a knife—this will keep a skin from forming on the curd. Refrigerate until completely chilled. The curd will continue to thicken as it cools. It will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for up to a week.



Bumbleberry Pie

Yields one 9-inch pie; serves six.

There's no such thing as a bumbleberry—it's a name pioneer cooks gave to dishes made with a combination of berries.

- 1 recipe Buttery Shortbread Pastry Dough (see p. 68)**
- 1 cup fresh blueberries, plus a small handful for garnish**
- 1 cup fresh strawberries, plus a small handful for garnish**
- 1 cup fresh red raspberries, plus a small handful for garnish**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar**
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch**
- Kosher salt**
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- 1 cup heavy cream**
- 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure vanilla extract**

Shape the dough into a 1-inch-thick disk, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate to firm a bit, 20 to 30 minutes. You want the dough to remain pliable enough to roll, but not so soft that it's sticky and difficult to move once it's rolled out. Lightly flour a clean surface and your rolling pin. Roll out the dough into a $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick round. (Run a dough scraper under the dough after every few passes of the rolling pin to prevent sticking, and re-flour the surface as necessary.) Lay the rolling pin in the center of the crust, fold the pastry over it, and transfer it to a 9-inch pie pan. Gently press the dough into the pan. Trim the overhang to about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. (You'll have about 6 ounces of excess dough. I like to roll the dough out and use it for cookies; for instructions, see *From Our Test Kitchen*, p. 76.) Fold the overhang under to build up the edge of the pastry; crimp to flute the edges. Prick the entire

surface, including the sides, with a fork. Cover loosely and refrigerate for half an hour. Meanwhile, heat the oven to 400°F.

Apply a light coating of non-stick cooking spray to one side of a piece of aluminum foil that's slightly larger than the diameter of the pie pan. Line the pan with the foil, oiled side down, going up and over the edges, and fill with pie weights, raw rice, or dried beans. Set the pie pan on a baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes. Carefully remove the foil and pie weights and bake until the crust is golden brown, about another 15 minutes. Transfer the pie crust to a rack and let cool while you make the filling.

Gently rinse the berries and spread them on a paper-towel-lined baking sheet to dry (keep the berries separate). Hull the strawberries and slice them $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Combine the 1 cup blueberries, sugar, cornstarch,

tip: Knowing how much sugar to add is essential for good berry desserts. Always start by tasting the berries plain. If they need it, add a little sugar then try them again. The first flavor to hit your palate should be fruit, not sugar—a fundamental rule to follow for all berry recipes and especially for berry sauces.

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt, and $\frac{2}{3}$ cup water in a medium-size saucepan. Set the pan over medium heat and bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture turns deep purple, thickens, and becomes translucent instead of cloudy looking, 1 to 2 minutes once the mixture begins bubbling. Remove from the heat and stir in the 1 cup strawberries, butter, and lemon juice. Sprinkle the 1 cup raspberries over the bottom of the pie crust and pour the filling over the top. Refrigerate until firm, about 4 hours. The pie can be made to this stage up to 12 hours in advance.

Just before serving, whip the cream to medium-firm peaks with the confectioners' sugar and the vanilla extract and mound on top of the filling. Scatter the remaining berries over the whipped cream for garnish. Serve immediately.

Rustic Red Raspberry Turnovers

Yields 12 petite turnovers.

Toss the berries with the sugar and spices after you've rolled and cut the dough.

1 recipe Buttery Shortbread Pastry Dough (see p. 68)

4 teaspoons granulated sugar; more as needed

1 tablespoon all-purpose flour

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg

2 cups (8 to 10 ounces) fresh red raspberries, rinsed and air-dried or patted dry with paper towels

1 to 2 tablespoons milk

Divide the pastry in half. Pat each half into roughly a square shape about 1 inch thick, wrap each in plastic, and chill for 20 minutes.

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment. On a lightly floured surface, using a floured rolling pin, roll out one square of the pastry into a 9x14-inch rectangle. If the dough is too sticky, dust it too with a little flour. Cut the dough into six rounds, each about 4 inches in diameter. Remove the excess dough

from around the rounds and discard or save for another use (for a yummy idea, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 76). Run a metal spatula under each round to separate it from the counter.

In a large bowl, stir the 4 teaspoons sugar and the flour, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add the raspberries and gently toss to coat. Taste and add more sugar if the fruit seems tart.

Put a heaping tablespoon of raspberries (three to six berries, depending on size) in a single layer on one half of each dough round. Press gently to flatten the berries a bit. Dampen the pastry edges with a little water and carefully fold the other side of the dough over the berries to make a half moon. Press the edges of the dough together with your fingers or the tines of a fork. If any small cracks formed in the dough, pinch them together as best you can with damp fingers. Use a spatula to transfer the turnovers to the baking sheet.

Repeat this process with the remaining half of the pastry dough and the rest of the berries. When all the turnovers are assembled, refrigerate for at least 15 minutes and up to 4 hours. Mean-

while, position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F.

When ready to bake, brush the tops of the turnovers (but not the edges or they will get too brown) with the milk and sprinkle with sugar. Bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Winner of a James Beard award, Janie Hibler has written five cookbooks including, most recently, The Berry Bible. ♦



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BY JENNIFER ARMENTROUT

Edamame

Not just for snacking

Japan, edamame are often served as a bar snack.

Because they're popular in Japan, edamame pods can be found fresh there. But here, it's more common to find frozen parcooked edamame, either shelled or still in the pod. Some markets also carry fullycooked shelled edamame in their produce sections. Parcooked edamame require just a quick warm-up to be ready to eat.

To prepare edamame for snacking out of hand, heat the frozen pods in boiling water until hot or in a dry skillet over high heat until thawed and slightly charred. Sprinkle the pods with kosher or sea salt. As your guests shell the

edamame, the salt will stick to their fingers and season the beans.

Edamame aren't just a snack, though; they go well with other foods. Think of them as an alternative to fava beans or lima beans, as in the recipe for Seared Rib-Eye Steaks with Edamame & Garlic on p. 90c. Another use for edamame is "soyccotash": Sauté shelled edamame in butter with a mix of fresh vegetables and herbs, like sweet onion, fresh corn, summer squash, bell pepper, tomatoes, fresh marjoram, and a little jalapeño or serrano for kick.

—Allison Ebri,
test kitchen associate

Lean, green, and high in protein, edamame—Japanese for "beans on a branch"—are a type of soybean that's picked when young, plump, and tender (as opposed to field soybeans, which are harvested when mature and dry). Edamame have a sweet, nutty flavor that goes especially well with beer—in

what we mean by

Garlic paste

When we want to add raw garlic to a dressing or a dip, we often mash it to a paste first, rather than just mincing it. Raw garlic is a potent ingredient, and it can overwhelm when you get too much of it in a bite. Garlic paste basically dissolves into whatever you mix it, so as long as you don't use too much, its flavor won't knock you out.

To make garlic paste, begin by finely chopping the garlic. Sprinkle the chopped garlic with a big pinch of kosher salt—the salt is an abrasive that speeds the mashing, and it keeps the garlic from sticking to the knife. Next, hold the knife nearly parallel to the cutting board and scrape the side of the cutting edge of the knife over the garlic to mash the garlic against the board. Use the knife to scrape the garlic back into a pile and repeat the mashing until the garlic becomes a fine paste.



2 ways to seed & dice tomatoes

It's summer, and this issue is bursting with tomatoes. When a recipe calls for seeded and diced fresh tomatoes, there are a few ways to go about it. Here are two of our favorite methods, with some pros and cons of each.

Method 1

Best for round tomatoes

Core the tomato and cut it in half crosswise with a serrated knife to expose the seed chamber. Gently squeeze out the seeds, using a finger or a small table knife to help empty the chambers. Lay the seeded tomato halves, cut side down, on a cutting board. Holding the serrated knife parallel to the cutting board, cut the tomato halves horizontally into slices that are as thick as you want your dice to be. Next, cut each stack of tomato slices into strips as wide as you want your dice, and then slice these strips crosswise into dice.



Use a small table knife or a fingertip to flick out the seeds.

Cut the tomato into strips and then slice crosswise into dice, as you'd cut an onion.

PROS: You use the whole tomato; good for beefsteak tomatoes, which have a lot of delicious inner flesh.

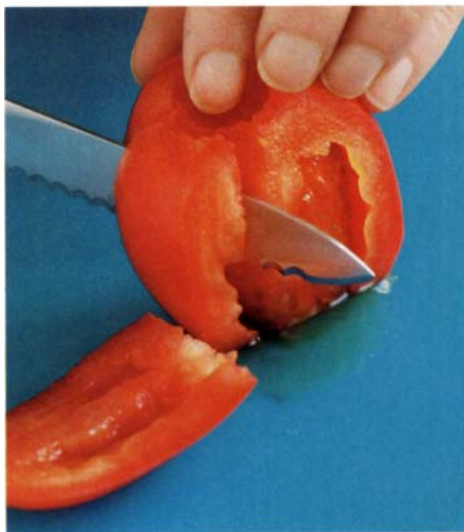
CONS: Takes a little more time; the stacks can be a little awkward to slice.



Method 2

Best for plum tomatoes

Cut a thin slice from the bottom to create a flat surface on which to stand the tomato. Cut wide strips from the top, curving down to the bottom, to separate the flesh from the inner seed core. Cut all the flesh away in this manner, leaving the seedy core of the tomato; discard the core. Cut each strip of flesh lengthwise as wide as you want your dice to be, and then cut these strips crosswise into dice.



Cut the flesh away from the seeds in wide, petal-like strips.

Cut the strips lengthwise and then crosswise into dice.

PROS: Fast; good for tomatoes with big seed chambers and less inner flesh, such as plum tomatoes.

CONS: You don't use the whole tomato; not great for really small dice because the flesh is usually at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick.



—A. E.



Making flour tortillas is easier than you think

I'd always heard that making flour tortillas by hand is pretty simple, but I'd never tried it until recently, when *Fine Cooking* decided to do a feature on quesadillas (see pp. 60–63). Here was the excuse I had been waiting for to give it a shot. Using various ingredient combinations, I tested several batches of tortillas before arriving at a recipe that made just what I was looking for: light and tender tortillas with soft, flaky layers. And you know what? They really are easy to make.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you have to make your own tortillas to try our quesadillas, but if you do, be forewarned: Once you taste these and see for yourself how uncomplicated it is to make them, store-bought tortillas may not taste the same ever again.

Handmade Flour Tortillas

Yields eight 9- to 10-inch tortillas.

9 ounces (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour; more for kneading and rolling

1 teaspoon table salt

¼ teaspoon baking powder

¼ cup cold vegetable shortening or lard, cut into small pieces

In a medium bowl, stir the flour, salt, and baking powder. Add the shortening or lard and cut it into the flour with a pastry blender or two table knives until the mixture resembles a coarse meal. Stir in $\frac{2}{3}$ cup warm water with a fork until a shaggy dough forms. **1** Turn the dough out onto a floured surface and

knead until smooth and soft, 3 to 4 minutes, reflouring the surface as necessary. After kneading, the dough shouldn't be very sticky.

Portion the dough into eight equal pieces (about 2 ounces each) and shape each piece into a ball. **2** Cover the dough balls loosely with plastic and let rest on the counter for at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours.

When ready to cook the tortillas, heat a large (11- to 12-inch) dry cast-iron skillet or griddle over medium heat until hot. Working with one ball of dough at a time (keep the remaining dough covered) and using just enough flour to prevent sticking, roll the dough

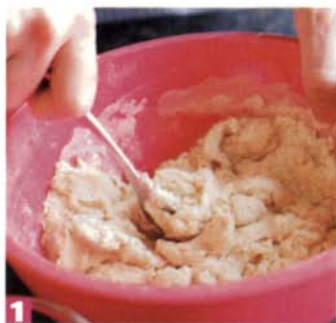
into a 9- to 10-inch round. The dough should be so thin that you can vaguely see the pattern of your countertop through it, and it should be more or less circular, though an amoeba shape is fine, too. **3**

Peel the dough off the counter and lay it in the skillet or on the griddle. Cook until the tortilla bubbles and puffs and the bottom browns in spots, 45 to 60 seconds. **4** If any gigantic bubbles form, pierce them so the tortilla cooks evenly. Flip with a spatula and cook until the second side gets brown in spots and any translucent, raw-looking areas become opaque, another 45 to 60 seconds. (If the tortillas

brown too quickly or start burning in spots, reduce the heat to medium low.) Transfer to a clean dishtowel and cover to keep warm. Repeat with the remaining dough, stacking and covering each tortilla as it's cooked.

Make-ahead tips: Because they're not loaded with preservatives, these tortillas taste best when freshly made. They'll stay pliable as long as they're kept warm. Leftover tortillas may be frozen (let cool thoroughly first).

Rewarm individual cooled or thawed tortillas on a griddle or skillet, or wrap several tortillas in foil and heat in a 350°F oven until warm and pliable, about 10 minutes.



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When Opportunity Knocks ...



Gail had been working in the medical field, first as a medical assistant, then as a surgical tech. The long evening surgery hours resulted in limited time at home with her family. After years, a change was needed. She came across an ad about Personal Chefs, and having a passion for food, she decided to call. "I simply needed more time at home, and to reclaim my time as my own"

Gail enrolled with the Culinary Business Academy to obtain specialized business knowledge to secure her success with this new venture. "The day I got home from training, my sister hired me as a Personal Chef." Gail has never looked back. Cooking for a wide variety of clients allows both professional and personal satisfaction, plus time for herself. Gail's advice: "Have passion and faith in yourself. Do what you love and your clients will love you for doing it!"

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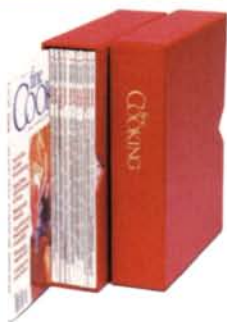
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leftovers:

Three fresh takes on chicken salad

The recipes for butterflied chicken on pp. 53–55 are so tasty that you probably won't have leftovers, but just in case, here are three fresh ideas for that gold standard of leftovers, chicken salad.

To make any of these salads: Mix the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. In a medium bowl, combine the salad ingredients

with the dressing, season to taste with salt and pepper, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour to allow the flavors to meld. Before serving, adjust the salt, pepper, and acidity. These recipes are for 1 cup chopped or shredded chicken, but they can easily be tailored to the amount of chicken you have left.

—A. E.



Mediterranean Chicken Salad with Fennel, Raisins & Pine Nuts

Yields about 1⅔ cups. Serve on toasted sliced baguette or ciabatta.

FOR THE DRESSING:

½ small clove garlic, mashed to a paste with a pinch of kosher salt
3 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Pinch cayenne

FOR THE SALAD:

1 cup chopped or shredded leftover Butterflied Chicken Dijon (p. 54)
⅓ cup small diced fresh fennel
3 tablespoons chopped sweet onion, such as Vidalia
2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts
2 tablespoons golden raisins
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley



Curried Chicken & Apple Salad

Yields about 2 cups. Serve on toasted pita points or other flatbread.

FOR THE DRESSING:

2 tablespoons mayonnaise
2 tablespoons whole-milk yogurt
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 teaspoon curry powder
½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger

FOR THE SALAD:

1 cup chopped or shredded leftover Yogurt-Marinated Butterflied Chicken (p. 53)
⅓ cup small-diced sweet or sweet-tart apple, such as Golden Delicious or Fuji
⅓ cup small-diced seeded English cucumber
1 tablespoon chopped shallot
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro or mint (or both)



Tex-Mex Chicken Salad

Yields about 1¾ cups. Serve with tortillas or tortilla chips.

FOR THE DRESSING:

2 tablespoons sour cream
1½ tablespoons fresh lime juice
Generous pinch ground cumin

FOR THE SALAD:

1 cup chopped or shredded leftover Beer-Brined Butterflied Chicken (p. 55)
½ ear fresh corn, browned under the broiler or on a grill, kernels removed (about ⅓ cup)
⅓ cup medium-diced cherry tomatoes
⅓ cup small-diced avocado
2 tablespoons thinly sliced scallions (about 2 scallions)
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
1 teaspoon minced fresh jalapeño or serrano



Turn extra pastry dough into bar cookies

The Buttery Shortbread Pastry recipe on p. 68 makes the perfect amount of dough for the Berry Tart recipe (p. 69), but if you make either the Bumbleberry Pie (p. 70) or the Raspberry Turnovers (p. 71), you'll have some leftover dough. While testing these recipes, kitchen intern Deanah Kim began using the leftovers to make shortbread cookie bars, which we think make a great coffee-break snack. Here's how she did it:

Gather the leftover dough and gently shape it into a rectangle that's about ½ inch thick and 3½ inches wide. Cut the rectangle crosswise into 1-inch-wide bars. Arrange the bars on a baking sheet and prick the ends with a fork or a skewer in a decorative pattern, if you like. Bake in the center of a 350°F oven until golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes.



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Herbes de Provence: Flavors of the South of France



Fresh thyme, summer savory, basil, marjoram, rosemary, and lavender thrive in the Mediterranean climate of Provence, a region of southern France. These herbs are the backbone of herbes de Provence, a mélange of dried herbs that may also include bay, sage, and sometimes cracked fennel seed (even though fennel isn't an herb).

The use of herbes de Provence isn't limited to the Mediterranean region, however; it's a kitchen staple throughout France, probably because its flavor is so versatile. It goes smashing with everything from roasted lamb and potatoes to zucchini, eggplant, and tomatoes.

It's especially great with chicken, as in the Butterflied Chicken Dijon Grilled on a Bed of Thyme on p. 54. Herbes de Provence is best added to dishes before or during cooking.

If your market doesn't carry herbes de Provence in its spice section, you can make your own by mixing:

- 1 tablespoon dried thyme**
- 1 tablespoon dried summer savory**
- 1 tablespoon dried marjoram**
- 1 tablespoon dried basil**
- 2 teaspoons dried rosemary**
- 1 teaspoon dried sage**
- 1 teaspoon cracked fennel seeds**
- ½ teaspoon dried lavender (optional)**

—A. E.

Daikon

A supersize radish

What looks like an albino carrot on steroids and tastes like a radish? No, this isn't a riddle—it's a description of a large, crisp, juicy Asian radish typically known by its Japanese name, *daikon*. There are several varieties of daikon, some of which are fairly mild and others that are spicier than red radishes. Shapes range from long and skinny to short and fat. There are pink daikon and green daikon, too. Daikon appears both raw and cooked in Asian cuisines from India to China. To try one of the ways daikon is used in Vietnam, check out our recipe for Vietnamese Noodle Salad on p. 65.

Daikon is easily found in Asian markets. If your supermarket carries daikon—many of them do—it's likely to be a variety like the one shown above. A good daikon should be smooth and unblemished, and it should feel firm and



heavy for its size. Stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator vegetable bin, it can last up to two weeks. Peel daikon before using it, but for the best flavor, wait to prepare it until shortly before you need it. Though they're often cut off at the market, daikon leaves are edible too; if you find one with the leaves still on (farmers' markets are a good place to look), add them raw to a salad or sauté them.

Overdressing

The fatal flaw of the salad

I've been served my share of bad salads, and I admit that I've made a few, too. In just about every case, a heavy hand with the dressing was to blame. Too much dressing overpowers the salad's flavor and weighs down the delicate greens, causing them to become limp. Always err on the side of underdressing. A salad should be just lightly filmed with dressing. You can always add more, but you can't take it away.

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Solid white canned tuna in water

BY LAURA GIANNATEMPO

Canned tuna is a mainstay of the American pantry. Who doesn't have a can or two stacked in the kitchen cabinet, ready to be opened in a pinch for a quick tuna sandwich when the fridge looks desolately empty?

To find out which brand is best, *Fine Cooking* staffers participated in a blind tasting of five nationally available brands of solid white (albacore) tuna in water. We drained them and tasted them straight.

Surprisingly, there was little consensus; we all seemed to have a different idea of what canned tuna should taste like. Some tasters were partial to a very mild, clean flavor; others seemed to prefer bolder, more assertive tunas. So, while our panel was nearly unanimous in singling out Chicken of the Sea as a favorite, the runner-up, Bumble Bee, was one of the mildest tunas of the bunch, while the third, Geisha, was by far the most aggressive.

Top
pick



CHICKEN OF THE SEA
\$1.79 (6 ounces)

The clean, subtly fishy flavor and well-balanced saltiness of this tuna, along with its firm, meaty texture, made it a favorite among tasters, who consistently ranked it in their top three. And it looked good, too: A healthy pinkish-white color with no blood line, and nice big chunks.

Runners-up Tunas numbered in order of preference; prices will vary.



2 BUMBLE BEE
\$1.79 (6 ounces)

This tuna was a decent blank canvas: Mild and clean with no off flavors and a firm but moist texture. Big, white flakes made it visually appealing as well. One taster said it was "confidence-inspiring," although some found it a bit waterlogged and too bland.



3 GEISHA
\$1.39 (6 ounces)

Assertive and salty but with an overall clean, pleasant flavor, some panelists proclaimed this the tastiest tuna of all. Those who were after a more subdued flavor, however, felt it was too salty and strong. Others commented on a slight metallic aftertaste. Almost everyone thought its dry texture and less-than-perfect appearance were forgettable.



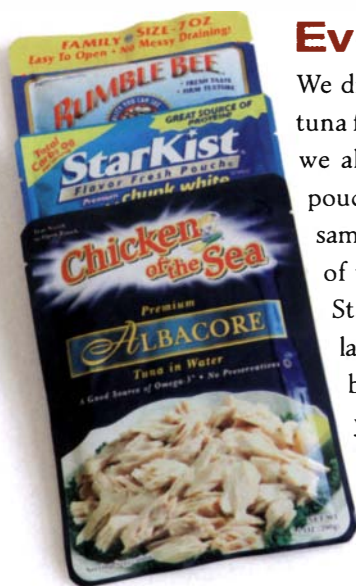
4 STARKIST
\$1.69 (6 ounces)

It wasn't looks or texture that caused this tuna's score to plummet. Its large, good-looking light pink flakes were firm to the bite, yet tender and moist. But its flavor couldn't keep up with appearances: It had a bitter finish (identified by some as "processed").



5 3 DIAMONDS
\$1.39 (6 ounces)

This tuna was not our favorite. From the grayish color and conspicuous blood line to the tough, chewy mouth-feel and, most importantly, the bland, vaguely metallic flavor, there wasn't much to be impressed with. Even tasters who normally like their tunas on the mild side found this one too dull.



Ever wonder about tuna in pouches?

We did. So, as we tasted cans of tuna for this issue's tasting panel, we also sampled white tuna in pouches made by some of the same brands—namely, Chicken of the Sea, Bumble Bee, and Starkist. We weren't particularly impressed. Pouches may be easier to handle because you don't have to go through the trouble of opening and

draining a can. And, because no water is added before pouches are sealed, the flavor tends to be more concentrated. But this doesn't always mean it's better. Sometimes, it just means the tuna is saltier and a bit fishier than its canned counterpart, but no more pleasant or satisfying.

What's more, if it's true that we eat with our eyes first, pouched

tuna doesn't make a good first impression. We couldn't help but think of astronaut fare when we saw these compressed slabs of tuna meat come out of the bag. While we didn't mind the flavor and texture of Bumble Bee's pouch, we'll probably continue to reach for the can opener when we crave that tuna sandwich.

The other tuna: packed in olive oil

You wouldn't think of canned tuna as a gourmet food that's so good you'd eat it straight from the can—unless it's high quality and packed in olive oil, that is.

While the familiar canned tuna in water is fine mixed with mayo and smeared between two pieces of bread, when you want the tuna to really shine—like in Niçoise salad or a pasta

sauce—tuna in olive oil is a much tastier choice. It has it all: It's rich and meaty, moist from the oil, and packed with satisfying tuna flavor.

Tunas packed in olive oil are generally made with yellowfin tuna instead of albacore, and they're filleted and canned by hand, resulting in larger, appealing chunks. Many olive-oil-packed tunas come in jars, but cans are available, too, and tend to be less expensive. Our hands-down favorite is Ortiz Bonito del Norte, but with a price of up to \$11 for a 6-ounce jar, it's probably beyond what most are willing to fork out for canned (or jarred) food, no matter how good. We found that Genova offers decent quality tuna in olive oil at a much more affordable price (less than \$3 for a 6-ounce can).



The “caviar” of tuna

Our round-up of tunas wouldn't be complete without a very special kind of canned tuna: ventresca. Ventresca is the prized belly meat of the tuna, what the Japanese call *toro* and use for the highest quality, most expensive sushi and sashimi. Olive-oil-packed ventresca is truly in a category of its own. Made from yellowfin (and sometimes bluefin) tuna, it has a soft, buttery, silky texture and a rich, complex flavor that blew us away. We vowed this would be the only canned tuna we'd ever eat again—until we saw the price tags (a 4-ounce can easily goes for \$15). We're partial to the Spanish brand Zoe Diva Select (\$6.99 for a 4-ounce can) for its complex flavor, fruity notes, and good price-to-quality ratio, but we also liked Callipo (\$9.99 for a 4.4-ounce can) and Ortiz (\$14.99 for a 4-ounce can).

Rich, meaty, and packed with flavor, tuna in olive oil is a tastier choice when you want the tuna to shine.

The ins and outs of Salting Meat

BY PAULA FIGONI

When you spend a lot of time around chefs, as I do, you often hear about different techniques for salting meat. Chefs tend to be passionate about the way they salt and can be skeptical of others' ways. Some chefs swear by brining. Others insist that salt rubs are best. I like to call this the great "salting in" versus "salting out" debate. If you think this is an idle argument, consider this: According to Thomas Keller, perfectionist chef-owner of the French Laundry restaurant in California's Napa Valley, "the ability to salt food properly is the single most important skill in cooking." So let's take a closer look at these two hotly debated salting techniques.

Both techniques involve leaving meat in salt for a long time before cooking it. With the salting-in

method—a.k.a. brining—the meat sits in salt water for several hours or overnight, during which time the salt water penetrates the interior of the meat. When cooked, properly brined meat has a moist, tender texture, little shrinkage, and is uniformly salted throughout. In the salting-out method, meat gets rubbed with lots of dry salt and then sits in the fridge for several hours before it's cooked. This salting method gives meat delicious flavor but doesn't have as big an impact on its texture or moisture level.

In comparing these two techniques, it isn't so much a question of which is better but rather when you should use one instead of the other. With a little more information, you'll be able to choose your salting method with confidence.

Brining keeps lean cuts of meat moist and tender

Home cooks and chefs alike have taken to brining—and for good reason. Brining can make meat moist and tender. And with today's lean chicken, turkey, and pork, a little boost in juiciness is welcome.

How does a brine work its magic?

Think of a piece of meat as a mass of tightly entwined protein strands. When you submerge the meat in a salt-water brine, the salt causes the tightly wound protein strands to loosen and unwind. Like a sponge, the loosened strands take up and trap additional water. The meat has gone from being a dense, taut mass of protein to a soft, fluid web of

protein and salt water. This extra moisture can make all the difference when you're grilling, roasting, or sautéing small, lean cuts—such as boneless chicken or turkey breasts, pork chops or cutlets, and even seafood—that dry out easily if overcooked.

People sometimes gripe that brined meat doesn't brown well, but this is a result of surface moisture rather than the brining process. And it's a problem easily solved: Simply pat the meat dry before cooking so that moisture won't interfere with browning, and be sure to use high heat. Another thing you can



do to boost browning is add a little sugar to the brine.

To brine a large roast or a whole bird, you need lots of space and time. Brining pork roasts and whole turkeys and chickens has become popular,

Dry-salt rubs are ideal for fattier cuts

Salting out, in which dry salt, often mixed with other seasonings, is rubbed onto meat that's then refrigerated for several hours or overnight, is surely an easier technique than brining for large roasts and turkeys. There's no need to prepare gallons of brine and no need to find a large pail that will fit in your refrigerator. But convenience isn't the only advantage of this technique.

A salt rub also improves meat's flavor and texture. Over time, the salt penetrates the meat, seasoning it more deeply than if you salted just before cooking. As with brining, you get some tenderizing as the salt causes proteins to unwind and loosen. But, unlike brining, there's no added moisture with this salting technique.

Moisture lost but flavor gained.

Actually, a little moisture is lost with this method, as the salt pulls water out of muscle cells onto the surface of the meat. I don't recommend dry salting for meats that need all the extra moisture they can get, such as boneless chicken breasts and lean cuts of pork. But for larger cuts and meat that's well marbled with fat—from prime rib, leg of lamb, and whole birds to rib-eye steaks and lamb chops—a little lost surface moisture doesn't undermine the meat's natural succulence; in fact, the meat's appeal will only be enhanced by the tenderizing and flavor-boosting effects of a dry-salt rub. As with salting in, the length of time to properly salt out depends on the size of the cut of meat. In general,



8 to 24 hours is appropriate. Any longer, and the meat could toughen and dry out.

If you like your meat well seared, with bold grill marks and a crisp browned crust, this is the technique for you. But when you use it, keep in mind that surface moisture inhibits browning. To get a great sear, pat the meat dry with a paper towel before cooking and use high heat. It's also a good idea to leave the salted meat uncovered when you put it in the refrigerator so the cold circulating air can dry out the meat's surface.

and the results can be tasty, but the process isn't exactly convenient. Their size means it takes at least eight hours for brine to penetrate throughout, so you'll need to clear a large spot in your refrigerator to place the meat while it brines. A large cooler could work, too, as long as the brine stays icy cold. Also, sauces or gravy made from the pan drippings of brined meat might be too salty to enjoy. That's why I prefer dry salting for large roasts and whole birds.

Top brining Q's: How much salt? And for how long?

Typically, brines contain 1 cup salt, more or less, to 1 gallon of water. Never put meat into warm brine, which can encourage bacterial growth and can also draw out the meat's natural juices. It's safest if the brine is refrigerator-cold before you add the meat.

Brining time depends on the type and size of the meat, as well as on how much salt is in the brine. Generally, the smaller the item, the less time it needs to soak in the brine: Shrimp need just 30 minutes, chicken breasts and pork chops 4 to 8 hours, and a whole turkey 12 to 24 hours.

A good recipe will tell you exactly how much salt to use and how long to soak the meat; it's best to follow

the directions, because oversalting ruins more than just flavor. When too many protein strands unwind, the meat becomes spongy, rather like lunch meat. Also, at high levels, salt interacts with myoglobin, the protein that gives meat its color. Light meat, especially near bone, sometimes turns pink from the interaction of salt with myoglobin, so chicken or pork will look undercooked even though it's done, and no amount of cooking will make the pink coloration go away.

Paula Figoni, the author of How Baking Works, is a food scientist and an associate professor in the College of Culinary Arts at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. ♦



Butterflied Chicken, p. 52

To butterfly a chicken, Elizabeth Karmel prefers to use kitchen shears (although a chef's knife will do the job, too). A few brands that we like: Messermeister take-apart utility shears (\$24.95 at Cheftools.com; 866-716-2433), KitchenAid all-purpose kitchen shears (\$14.99 at Amazon.com), Zyliss multi-purpose shears (\$13.45 at Justknives101.com; 800-585-1330), and Wüsthof come-apart kitchen shears (\$19.95 at Cutleryandmore.com).

Berry Desserts, p. 66

For the Simple Berry Tarts, you'll need 4¾-inch round, fluted tart pans with removable bottoms. Sets of four are \$11.95 at Cooking.com (800-663-8810). The giant spatula (\$19.95) from Bakerscatalogue.com (800-827-6836) is a big help when working with the tender dough in these recipes.



Basil, p. 46

You can find interesting basil varieties at local nurseries and farmers' markets. To mail-order seeds, try Naturehills.com (402-934-8116), Reneesgarden.com (888-880-7228), Richters.com (905-640-6677), or Kitchengardenseeds.com (860-567-6086). To mail-order basil plants, visit Richters.com (905-640-6677), Mulberrycreek.com (419-433-6126), or Wellsweep.com (908-852-5390).

The book *Basil: An Herb Lover's Guide*, by Thomas DeBaggio and Susan Belsinger (Interweave Press, 1996), is a must-read for all basil fanatics. Although out of print, it is worth seeking out. Look for it at your local library or in used book stores.

Asian Salad, p. 64

Both fish sauce and rice vermicelli noodles are available in the ethnic food sections of many supermarkets, but you can also mail-order these products from Orientalpantry.com (978-264-4576). Prices start at \$1.49 for fish sauce and \$1.29 for rice vermicelli noodles.



In Season, p. 24

Look for parsley seeds and transplants at your local garden center.

If you'd like to try using a mezzaluna for chopping parsley and other herbs, you can find one at most kitchen shops, or visit Kitchen-universe.com (800-481-6679), where Henckels' twin select mezzaluna with a double knife is \$43.95. Along with it, you might like to have a mezzaluna board; it's a cutting board with a round indentation that accommodates the mezzaluna blades. We like the one at left, which is \$100 at Lamson & Goodnow (800-872-6564).

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|---|------|----------|----------|---------|------|----------|-----|------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------------------------------|
| | | total | from fat | (g) | (g) | total | sat | mono | poly | (mg) | (mg) | (g) | (analysis per serving) |
| Summer Side Dishes | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grilled Bread Salad with Tomatoes & Spicy Greens | 10e | 260 | 130 | 6 | 29 | 14 | 1.5 | 8 | 3 | 0 | 480 | 4 | based on 6 servings |
| Grilled Tomatoes | | 100 | 70 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 150 | 2 | based on 6 servings |
| Tomato Salad with Feta, Olives & Mint | | 230 | 170 | 6 | 10 | 19 | 6 | 11 | 1.5 | 25 | 680 | 2 | based on 6 servings |
| White Beans with Garlic, Lemon & Parmesan | | 220 | 90 | 10 | 25 | 10 | 1.5 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 430 | 6 | based on 6 servings |
| Warm Green Bean, Pancetta & Tomato Salad with Parmesan | | 240 | 170 | 8 | 12 | 19 | 5 | 10 | 2 | 25 | 890 | 4 | based on 8 servings |
| Simply Delicious Green Beans | | 80 | 45 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 0.5 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 0 | 220 | 4 | based on 4 servings |
| Grilled Potato, Corn & Red Onion Salad over Arugula | | 190 | 110 | 3 | 20 | 12 | 1.5 | 9 | 1.5 | 0 | 230 | 2 | based on 6 servings |
| Creamy Potato Salad with Radishes, Lemon & Dill | | 290 | 170 | 3 | 26 | 19 | 4.5 | 1 | 0 | 20 | 760 | 3 | based on 6 servings |
| Potato Salad with Cilantro | | 270 | 160 | 3 | 25 | 18 | 2.5 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 690 | 3 | based on 6 servings |
| Sautéed Zucchini with Sun-Dried Tomatoes & Basil | | 110 | 90 | 1 | 4 | 11 | 1.5 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 290 | 1 | based on 4 servings |
| Southwestern Squash Sauté | | 110 | 60 | 2 | 10 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 150 | 2 | based on 6 servings |
| Grilled Zucchini & Goat Cheese Roll-Ups | | 45 | 30 | 2 | 1 | 3.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 0 | 5 | 190 | 0 | based on 10 servings |
| Barley & Black-Eyed Pea Salad | | 150 | 50 | 4 | 24 | 6 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 260 | 5 | based on 8 servings |
| Shells with Arugula, Feta & Sun-Dried Tomatoes | | 280 | 100 | 9 | 36 | 11 | 3.5 | 6 | 1 | 15 | 540 | 1 | based on 10 servings |
| Summer Wheatberry Salad | | 210 | 100 | 4 | 26 | 12 | 1.5 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 380 | 4 | based on 6 servings |
| In Season | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Parsley & Arugula Salsa Verde | 24 | 290 | 280 | 1 | 3 | 31 | 5 | 21 | 4 | 5 | 130 | 1 | per 1/4 cup serving |
| Rub, Grill, Top | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spice-Rubbed Grilled Pork Chops, Chicken Breasts & Turkey Cutlets | 38 | 180 | 100 | 21 | 0 | 11 | 3 | 5 | 1.5 | 60 | 45 | 0 | using pork, w/o rub & salsa |
| Fennel-Paprika Spice Rub | | 25 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 320 | 1 | per 1 Tbs. |
| Cherry Tomato Salsa with Capers & Green Olives | | 25 | 15 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1.5 | 0 | 0 | 150 | 1 | per 1/4 cup serving |
| Ginger, Cinnamon & Clove Spice Rub | | 30 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 380 | 1 | per 1 Tbs. |
| Green Grape Salsa with Scallions & Mint | | 25 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 130 | 1 | per 1/4 cup serving |
| Cumin, Coriander & Turmeric Spice Rub | | 25 | 5 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 280 | 1 | per 1 Tbs. |
| Pineapple Salsa with Radishes, Peppers & Cilantro | | 10 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 110 | 0 | per 1/4 cup serving |
| Brownies | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rich, Fudgy Brownies | 43 | 250 | 120 | 3 | 32 | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2.5 | 85 | 105 | 1 | based on 16 servings |
| Port-Soaked Dried Cherries with Port-Ganache Topping | | 110 | 50 | 1 | 12 | 6 | 3.5 | 2 | 0 | 10 | 5 | 1 | based on 16 servings |
| Basil | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cherry Tomatoes Stuffed with Mozzarella & Basil | 46 | 180 | 130 | 10 | 4 | 14 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 20 | 390 | 1 | based on 6 servings |
| Deconstructed Pesto Pasta | | 560 | 250 | 16 | 60 | 28 | 6 | 12 | 6 | 20 | 610 | 3 | based on 6 servings |
| Flounder Poached in Coconut, Ginger & Basil Broth | | 320 | 90 | 34 | 21 | 10 | 6 | 1.5 | 2 | 85 | 910 | 2 | based on 6 servings |
| Grilled Corn & Tomato "Salad" with Basil Oil | | 160 | 130 | 1 | 7 | 15 | 2 | 11 | 1.5 | 0 | 250 | 2 | based on 8 servings |
| Basil Oil | | 160 | 160 | 0 | 0 | 18 | 2.5 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 45 | 0 | per 1 Tbs. |
| Basil Butter | | 100 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 30 | 70 | 0 | per 1 Tbs. |
| Butterflied Chicken | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yogurt-Marinated Butterflied Chicken | 52 | 470 | 230 | 52 | 3 | 26 | 7 | 10 | 6 | 170 | 1000 | 0 | based on 4 servings |
| Butterflied Chicken Dijon Grilled on a Bed of Thyme | | 560 | 330 | 53 | 2 | 37 | 11 | 15 | 7 | 180 | 850 | 1 | based on 4 servings |
| Beer-Brined Butterflied Chicken | | 520 | 290 | 52 | 3 | 33 | 8 | 15 | 6 | 165 | 670 | 0 | based on 4 servings |
| Chopped Salads | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chopped Mexican Salad | 56 | 270 | 150 | 5 | 28 | 16 | 2.5 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 250 | 10 | based on 8 servings |
| Chopped Greek Salad with Garlic Croutons | | 390 | 290 | 9 | 14 | 33 | 8 | 21 | 3.5 | 35 | 1270 | 2 | based on 8 servings |
| Chopped Shrimp "Waldorf" Salad | | 240 | 140 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 90 | 380 | 2 | based on 8 servings |
| Quesadillas | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mushroom & Fontina Quesadillas | 60 | 180 | 100 | 7 | 13 | 11 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 25 | 360 | 1 | based on 12 servings |
| Three-Cheese Quesadillas with Garlic Butter | | 190 | 110 | 9 | 13 | 12 | 7 | 3.5 | 0.5 | 25 | 310 | 1 | based on 12 servings |
| Mozzarella, Tomato & Basil Quesadillas with Parmesan Crust | | 170 | 80 | 7 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0.5 | 20 | 280 | 1 | based on 12 servings |
| Asian Salad | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vietnamese Noodle Salad with Pork Patties (Bun Chá) | 64 | 640 | 210 | 32 | 73 | 23 | 8 | 10 | 2 | 100 | 730 | 3 | based on 3 servings w/o sauce |
| Vietnamese Dipping Sauce (Nuoc Cham) | | 50 | 0 | 1 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1240 | 0 | per 1/4 cup serving |
| Berry Desserts | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Easiest Berry Sauce | 66 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | per 2 Tbs. |
| Mixed Berry Tarts with Lemony Filling | | 560 | 330 | 8 | 51 | 38 | 23 | 10 | 2 | 205 | 340 | 3 | based on 8 servings |
| Lemon Curd | | 50 | 25 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1.5 | 1 | 0 | 30 | 10 | 0 | per 2 Tbs. |
| Bumbleberry Pie | | 750 | 420 | 7 | 77 | 47 | 29 | 13 | 2 | 175 | 470 | 4 | based on 6 servings |
| Rustic Red Raspberry Turnovers | | 230 | 130 | 3 | 22 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 0.5 | 55 | 200 | 2 | based on 12 servings |
| Test Kitchen | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Handmade Flour Tortillas | 72 | 160 | 50 | 3 | 23 | 6 | 1.5 | 2 | 1.5 | 0 | 300 | 1 | based on 8 servings |
| Mediterranean Chicken Salad with Fennel, Raisins & Pine Nuts | | 170 | 120 | 8 | 4 | 14 | 3 | 5 | 4.5 | 30 | 290 | 1 | per 1/4 cup w/o bread |
| Curried Chicken & Apple Salad | | 90 | 60 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 1.5 | 2 | 2 | 25 | 340 | 0 | per 1/4 cup w/o bread |
| Tex-Mex Chicken Salad | | 110 | 60 | 9 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 30 | 250 | 1 | per 1/4 cup w/o tortillas |
| Quick & Delicious | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Seared Rib-Eye Steaks with Edamame & Garlic | 90c | 960 | 600 | 63 | 23 | 67 | 15 | 37 | 4.5 | 190 | 510 | 8 | based on 2 servings |
| Baked Salmon with Citrus Vinaigrette | | 360 | 210 | 32 | 3 | 24 | 3.5 | 13 | 5 | 90 | 350 | 0 | based on 4 servings |
| Hot Italian Sausage with Fresh Corn Polenta | | 770 | 440 | 32 | 53 | 49 | 19 | 20 | 6 | 100 | 2210 | 5 | based on 6 servings |
| Arugula Salad with Shrimp, Corn, Cherry Tomatoes & Red Chile | | 490 | 320 | 22 | 24 | 36 | 5 | 25 | 4.5 | 165 | 390 | 4 | based on 4 servings |
| Pancetta, Tomato & Avocado Sandwich with Aioli | | 960 | 710 | 21 | 45 | 79 | 16 | 48 | 8 | 160 | 2120 | 8 | based on 4 servings |
| Grilled Chicken Breasts with Green-Olive Relish | | 640 | 510 | 30 | 5 | 57 | 8 | 40 | 7 | 75 | 1360 | 3 | based on 4 servings |
| Penne with Eggplant, Tomato & Basil | | 580 | 210 | 15 | 80 | 23 | 3.5 | 15 | 3 | 5 | 460 | 9 | based on 4 servings |
| Back Cover | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Linguine with Hot Chile, Caramelized Onion & Gremolata | | 500 | 200 | 12 | 60 | 23 | 12 | 7 | 1.5 | 45 | 580 | 2 | based on 6 servings |

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at Nutritional Solutions in Melville, New York. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used in the

calculations. Optional ingredients and those listed without a specific quantity are not included. When a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion is used. When the

quantity of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper per serving for entrées, and 1/8 teaspoon salt and 1/16 teaspoon pepper per serving for side dishes.

a feast for the holidays



an easy meal for any day

Australian Lamb makes a delicious holiday highlight. It's also easy and quick to prepare for everyday meals. Flavorful chops, shanks or legs are perfect for roasting, grilling or braising in minutes. And because Australian Lamb grazes on lush, green pastures, it's mild, lean and rich in nutrients—ideal for everyone at your table, any time of the year.

Warm Australian Lamb Salad with Sweet Potato

- 1 leg of Australian Lamb, butterflied
 - salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
 - 2 pounds sweet potatoes
 - 2 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 tablespoons red wine or sherry vinegar
 - 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
 - juice and zest of 1/2 orange
 - 2 bunches arugula, torn
 - 1 small red onion, halved, thinly sliced
 - 6 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
1. Trim lamb. Season with salt and pepper.
 2. Peel and dice the potatoes into 1/2-inch pieces and toss with the olive oil to coat. Place on a baking sheet and oven roast at 375° F until tender (20-30 minutes).
 3. Heat barbecue or grill pan to medium-high and cook lamb 5 minutes per side. Cover barbecue or transfer lamb to the oven and cook for 8-10 minutes or until medium-rare (125-130° F internal). Cover loosely with foil. Allow lamb to rest 15 minutes.
 4. Meanwhile, combine vinegar, oil and juice for dressing. Season to taste. Toss warm potatoes, arugula and onion in a bowl. Add half the dressing, mix well. Slice lamb thinly across the grain and arrange over the salad. Scatter with the feta cheese and drizzle with remaining dressing.

For easy lamb recipes, store locations, and your FREE, 32-page cookbook, visit www.australian-lamb.com/fc today.

Free cookbook available while supplies last. Visit www.australian-lamb.com/fc or write to Simply Delicious Cookbook, PO Box 34176, Washington, DC 20043. © 2006 Meat & Livestock Australia



Fresh, Easy and Delicious.

A Quick Pasta with a Kick

Linguine with Hot Chile, Caramelized Onion & Gremolata

Serves four to six.

- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 large yellow onion, very thinly sliced**
- ½ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes**
- Kosher salt**
- 1 serrano or other fresh small, hot red or green chile, seeded and finely diced**
- 4 oz. (½ cup) unsalted butter, cut into about 5 pieces**
- 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- 1 lb. dried linguine**
- ⅓ cup roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
- 1 large clove garlic, finely chopped**
- 1 tsp. finely chopped lemon zest (see the tip below)**
- ½ cup grated Pecorino Romano; more for sprinkling**

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a 10-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and red pepper flakes, season with a big pinch of kosher salt, and cook, stirring frequently, until tender and nicely browned, about 15 minutes (reduce the heat to medium low if the onion is browning too fast). Add the chile and continue to cook for 1 minute. Turn off the heat, add the butter, and swirl the pan to melt. Add the lemon juice and another pinch of kosher salt. Keep warm.

Cook the linguine in the boiling water until al dente, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the gremolata: Combine the parsley, garlic, and lemon zest on a cutting board and chop them together with a chef's knife until the parsley is finely chopped and mixed well with the lemon and garlic.

Drain the pasta and return it to its cooking pot. Over medium heat, add the onion mixture to the pasta and toss to combine. Add the ½ cup Pecorino, quickly toss again, and add salt to taste. Transfer the pasta to a platter or shallow bowls. Sprinkle liberally with the gremolata and more Pecorino and serve.

—Tasha DeSerio ♦

Gremolata
—a combination of lemon zest, garlic, and parsley—adds a nice, fresh touch to this and many other dishes. Try sprinkling it on a creamy pasta, risotto, grilled shrimp, sautéed spinach, or steamed green beans.



Tip: Instead of grating the lemon for the gremolata, use a zester and then finely chop the long strips of zest with a chef's knife. This zest is a little chunkier and easier to sprinkle.

For more quick and delicious recipes, turn to the inside back cover.

THE BEST OF
fine
Cooking

Summer

COMPILED BY JOANNE McALLISTER SMART

Summer is the perfect time for making really delicious side dishes. Why? Once the grill is uncovered, choosing and making the main course becomes extremely easy: grilled steaks, grilled chicken, grilled fish (you get the idea). Not having to fret too much over the middle of the plate allows you to think more about the side. When you're stumped for what to serve (or bring to the Fourth of July picnic), look to these recipes, some of our favorites from past issues of *Fine*

Cooking. All feature the best of what's in season, combined with flavorful ingredients that make them feel extra special. While all of the recipes are great (it's hard not to get hungry just thinking about the Warm Green Bean, Pancetta & Tomato Salad), we're placing bets that your new favorite summer staples just may be Shells with Arugula, Sun-Dried Tomatoes & Feta; Creamy Potato Salad with Radishes, Lemon & Dill; and Simply Delicious Green Beans. Try them and see.

Side dishes to suit any menu

Antipasto spread

Grilled Zucchini & Goat Cheese Roll-Ups

Tomato Salad with Feta, Olives & Mint

White Beans with Garlic, Lemon & Parmesan

SERVE WITH: assorted cured meats and grilled bread

Kebab party

Grilled Bread Salad with Tomatoes & Spicy Greens

Potato Salad with Lemon & Cilantro

Simply Delicious Green Beans

SERVE WITH: beef, lamb, or shrimp kebabs

Portable picnic

Creamy Potato Salad with Radishes, Lemon & Dill

Shells with Arugula, Sun-Dried Tomatoes & Feta

Barley & Black-Eyed Pea Salad

SERVE WITH: fried chicken

From the grill

Grilled Potato, Corn & Red Onion Salad over Arugula

Grilled Tomatoes

SERVE WITH: grilled tuna steaks; burgers topped with blue cheese; or grilled sausage

on the side



White Beans with Garlic, Lemon & Parmesan

Serves four to six.

FOR THE BEANS:

- 1 cup dried white beans, such as Great Northern (to yield about 3 cups cooked) or**
- 1 29-ounce can white beans**

- Kosher salt**
- ¼ small onion**
- 1 3-inch sprig fresh rosemary**

FOR THE DRESSING:

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed**
- 1 3-inch sprig fresh rosemary**
- 3 anchovy fillets, rinsed and roughly chopped (optional, but great)**
- ¼ cup fresh finely grated Parmigiano Reggiano**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice**

TO ASSEMBLE:

- 1 pint cherry tomatoes or grape tomatoes, halved**
- ⅓ cup coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**

Prepare the beans: If using dried beans, put them in a large pot with 1 ½ tsp. kosher salt, the onion, and the rosemary. Cover by 3 to 4 inches of water. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, cover, and cook until the beans are very tender but not falling apart, 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours; longer if necessary. Let the beans cool in their liquid for 15 minutes. Drain the beans, transfer them to a large bowl, and keep them warm. (If using canned beans, rinse and drain them well.)

Make the dressing: In a small saucepan or skillet, combine the olive oil, garlic, and rosemary. Heat gently until the rosemary starts to sizzle lightly; remove the pan from the heat and let steep for about 20 minutes. Discard the rosemary. Take the garlic cloves from the oil (reserve the oil) and put them in a food processor, along with the anchovies, grated cheese, ¾ tsp. kosher salt, ¼ tsp. pepper, lemon zest, and lemon juice. Process to a fairly smooth mixture.

To assemble: Toss the dressing with the warm beans, using a rubber spatula to gently fold so the beans get well coated but not smashed. Let the beans sit for a few minutes and then toss a few more times. It may seem like too much liquid at first, but the beans will gradually absorb it all. Fold in the reserved infused oil, the tomatoes, and the parsley. Taste for seasoning and serve.

—Martha Holmberg,
Fine Cooking #58

bean tip:

In place of (or in addition to) standard green beans, try yellow wax beans, purple beans, young Romano beans, or even purple mottled Dragon's Tongue beans.



Warm Green Bean, Pancetta & Tomato Salad with Parmesan

Serves six to eight.

- 4 medium-size ripe tomatoes (about 18 oz. total)**
- 5 Tbs. sherry vinegar**
- 1 Tbs. honey**
- ½ lb. thinly sliced pancetta**
- 5 to 7 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 ½ lb. fresh green beans, ends trimmed (and halved if very long)**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh chives**
- 1 cup Parmigiano Reggiano shavings (from a 4-oz. chunk)**

Core the tomatoes, slice them in half horizontally, and flick out most of the seeds and juice with a fingertip. Cut the tomatoes into 1-inch chunks and put them in a large serving bowl. In a small bowl, mix the vinegar and honey.

In a 10- or 12-inch sauté pan over medium heat, cook the pancetta in two or three batches until crisp and golden, 3 to 5 minutes per batch. Remove the pancetta from the pan, drain on paper towels, chop roughly, and keep warm. Pour the fat into a dish, measure out 2 Tbs. and return to the pan (discard the rest). Add enough olive oil to give you about 7 Tbs. total fat in the pan. Set aside.

When you're ready to serve, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Put the beans in the boiling water and cook until just tender, about 5 minutes. Drain the beans and spread on paper towels or a dishtowel to dry briefly. Put the warm beans in the bowl with the tomatoes and set it at the back of the stovetop to keep warm.

Return the pan with the reserved pancetta fat and oil to

medium heat. When the fat is warm, whisk in the vinegar-honey mixture, turn the heat to high, and whisk until the mixture boils and emulsifies. Immediately pour the hot dressing over the vegetables in the bowl. Toss, season with salt and pepper, and add the chives. Sprinkle the chopped pancetta over the salad and scatter the cheese over the top; toss gently. Serve immediately.

—Tom Douglas, Fine Cooking #67



Simply Delicious Green Beans

Serves four.

If you like, while the beans are still warm, add a little creamy goat cheese, slivered sun-dried tomatoes, grated lemon zest, quartered olives, toasted pine nuts, or mint leaves; toss with plenty of olive oil and salt.

- 1 lb. fresh, tender green beans**
- 1 ½ Tbs. best-quality extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¼ tsp. fleur de sel or other medium-grain sea salt; more to taste**

Bring a pot of water to boil over high heat. Rinse the beans and trim their stems. Boil the beans just until tender, 4 to 5 minutes for regular green beans, less for extra-thin filet beans. Drain well. Spread the beans on a platter or shallow serving dish. If there is still water clinging to them, let them dry briefly. While the beans are still hot, drizzle with the olive oil. Toss gently with your hands or two serving forks, turning the beans until they're evenly coated with oil. Sprinkle with sea salt, toss, and serve warm.

—Ruth Lively, Fine Cooking #66

potatoes



Grilled Potato, Corn & Red Onion Salad over Arugula

Serves four to six.

- 1 Tbs. white-wine vinegar**
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 5 to 6 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- ½ Tbs. chopped fresh basil (optional)**
- 2 small ears corn, tender inner leaves left on but outer leaves and silks removed**
- 1 small red onion, thickly sliced (secure slices with a skewer if you like)**
- 1 lb. small red potatoes or fingerling potatoes, quartered or halved, depending on size**
- 2 Tbs. minced drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes**
- 2 oz. baby arugula**

In a small bowl, whisk the vinegar with the mustard, sugar, ¼ tsp. kosher salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Slowly whisk in 3 Tbs. of the oil. Add the basil if you like.

Light a charcoal grill and bank the coals to one side to make a hotter side and a cooler side. (On a gas grill, heat one side to medium high or high, the other side to low.) Grill the corn, turning it occasionally, and the onion, flipping once, until tender and browned in spots; 8 to 10 minutes. Set aside on a cutting board.

Toss the potatoes with 2 to 3 Tbs. of the olive oil and season them amply with salt and pepper. Put them cut side down on the grate directly over the hottest

part of the fire. Partially cover the grill, making sure the bottom vents are open (if using a charcoal grill). Cook the potatoes until they're a deep reddish-golden brown, 4 to 6 minutes, and turn them onto another cut side. Partially cover and grill until nicely colored, another 4 to 6 minutes. Move the potatoes to the cooler side of the grill, flipping them so they're skin side down. Partially cover and grill them indirectly until tender when pierced with a sharp knife, about another 6 minutes.

Meanwhile, remove the kernels from the cobs and very coarsely chop the onion; put both in a large bowl. While the potatoes are still warm, combine them with the corn, onion, and sun-dried tomatoes. Toss the arugula with a little less than 1 Tbs. of the dressing to coat it lightly. Mound it on four dinner plates. Toss the potato mixture with 2 to 3 Tbs. of the dressing and arrange on the arugula. Drizzle on any leftover dressing, if you like.

—*Susie Middleton,*
Fine Cooking #39

potato tip:

To turn potato salad into a main course, add some grilled shrimp or smoked trout.



Creamy Potato Salad with Radishes, Lemon & Dill

Serves six.

- 2 lb. unpeeled smallish red potatoes, scrubbed**
- Kosher salt**
- 2 inner ribs celery and their tender leaves, chopped (about ½ cup)**
- ¾ cup thinly sliced radishes**
- 3 scallions (white and tender green parts), chopped**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh dill**
- ¼ cup heavy cream**
- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 1½ tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1½ Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- 2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- Freshly ground pepper (black or white)**

Put the potatoes in a large pot of well-salted water. Bring to a boil and lower to a simmer. Cook, partially covered, until the potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Test by piercing a potato with a thin metal skewer; it should easily penetrate into the center of the potato and then slide right out. Drain the potatoes and let them cool.

When the potatoes are at room temperature, cut them into ¾-inch chunks and put them in a mixing bowl. Add the celery, radishes, scallions, and dill and fold gently to distribute; set aside.

In a small bowl, whisk the cream until frothy but not at all stiffened. Whisk in the mayonnaise and mustard. Add the lemon juice, zest, ½ tsp. kosher salt, and pepper to taste. Pour the dressing over the salad and fold it in with a rubber spatula. Taste for seasoning. Serve, or cover and chill for up to a day.

—*Molly Stevens,*
Fine Cooking #52

Potato Salad with Cilantro

Serves four to six.

- 2 lb. (6 to 8 medium) waxy potatoes, like Red Bliss, scrubbed**
- Kosher salt**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- ½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ cup lightly packed chopped fresh cilantro (from about 20 big sprigs)**
- 2 scallions (white and green parts), thinly sliced, or**
- 1 shallot, minced**

Put the potatoes in a large pot of well-salted water. Bring to a boil and lower to a simmer. Cook, partially covered, until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork or thin metal skewer, about 25 minutes. Drain and let cool slightly. While the potatoes are still warm, slice them about ¼ inch thick (there's no need



to peel, but discard any pieces of skin that come off on their own). Put half of the potatoes in a large serving bowl. In a small bowl, whisk the oil, lemon zest and juice, 1 tsp. kosher salt, and several grinds of pepper. Drizzle half of the dressing over the potatoes. Add the remaining potatoes to the bowl, drizzle on the rest of the dressing, and toss gently with a large rubber spatula to combine well. Add the cilantro and scallions and toss gently again. Taste and add more salt as needed. Serve warm or at room temperature.

—*Ruth Lively,*
Fine Cooking #58



Sautéed Zucchini with Sun-Dried Tomatoes & Basil

Serves four.

- 3 small or 2 medium zucchini (about 1 lb.)**
- Kosher salt**
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed and peeled**
- 2 oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, drained and finely diced**
- 6 fresh basil leaves, torn into large pieces**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice**

Trim the ends of the zucchini and quarter them lengthwise. Remove the top 1/4 to 1/2 inch of the seed core by running a sharp knife down the length of each quarter; it's all right if some of the seeds remain. Arrange the zucchini, cut side up, on a baking sheet lined with paper towels. Sprinkle with 1/2 tsp. kosher salt and set aside for 10 minutes. Blot the quarters dry with paper towels. Cut each quarter on the diagonal into 3/4-inch-thick diamonds.

Heat a large (12-inch) skillet over medium-high heat for 1 minute. Pour in 2 Tbs. of the oil. When the oil is hot, add the zucchini and garlic and sauté, stirring occasionally, until the zucchini browns and softens enough that you can cut through it with the side of a fork, about 5 minutes. Take the pan off the heat, toss in the sun-dried tomatoes and basil, and season generously with salt and pepper. Drizzle with the lemon juice and the remaining 1 Tbs. oil and serve immediately.

—Tony Rosenfeld,
Fine Cooking #65



Southwestern Squash Sauté

Serves four to six.

- 3 Tbs. olive oil**
- 1 medium onion, diced**
- Kosher salt**
- 1 medium red bell pepper, diced**
- 3 small or 2 medium zucchini or summer squash (about 1 lb.), cut into medium (1/3-inch) dice**
- 1 large ear fresh corn, kernels cut from the cob**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 large or 2 small fresh hot chiles (such as serrano or jalapeño), seeded and minced, or 1 mild green chile (such as poblano or Anaheim), roasted, peeled, seeded, and diced**
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin**
- 1/4 tsp. chili powder (optional)**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 to 2 Tbs. roughly chopped fresh cilantro**
- 1/2 lime**

Set a large skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add 2 Tbs. of the oil and let it heat. Add the onion, season with a little salt, and sauté until translucent, about 2 minutes. Add the diced red pepper and a little more salt and sauté for another 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer the pepper and onion to a bowl or plate. Turn the heat to high, add 1 more Tbs. oil and the zucchini. Season with salt and sauté for 3 or 4 minutes, stirring only occasionally, so that it begins to brown lightly and the flesh turns slightly translucent and is pleasantly tender (don't overcook; it should still be toothy, not mushy). Put the peppers and onions back in the pan, add the corn, garlic, and chiles, season again with salt, and sauté a few minutes more. Season with the cumin, the chili powder (if using), and a few grinds of pepper. Add the cilantro, squeeze the lime over all, toss, and serve.

—Ruth Lively,
Fine Cooking #51

Grilled Zucchini & Goat Cheese Roll-Ups

Yields 8 to 10 roll-ups.

- 3 oz. goat cheese, at room temperature**
- 1 Tbs. finely chopped oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, well drained**
- Heaping 1/2 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped**
- 1 to 1 1/2 Tbs. olive oil**
- Kosher salt**
- 3 small zucchini**
- 2 Tbs. freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano**

In a bowl, combine the goat cheese, sun-dried tomatoes, thyme, 1 tsp. of the olive oil, and 1/8 tsp. kosher salt.

Trim the ends of the zucchini and cut it lengthwise into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Brush both sides of each slice with plenty of olive oil and season with salt. Heat a gas grill to high. Lay the slices of zucchini on the hot grate at a 45-degree angle to the grates, and grill, covered, until well browned and limp, 3 to 4 minutes per side. When done, drape them over a cooling rack to keep them from steaming as they cool.

Spread 1 heaping tsp. of the filling thinly over one side of each grilled zucchini strip (use a mini spatula or your fingers to spread). Roll up the zucchini (not too



tightly; this is more like folding), and put them on a baking sheet lined with parchment or foil.

Refrigerate if not using within an hour (you can assemble them several hours ahead, but bring back to room temperature before broiling). Heat the broiler. Sprinkle the rolls with a little grated Parmigiano and brown under the broiler, about 1 minute.

—Susie Middleton,
Fine Cooking #51

zucchini tips:

Salting zucchini draws out excess moisture, giving it more flavor and prompting better browning.

Drape grilled zucchini slices over a cooling rack to keep them from steaming as they cool.

Wash zucchini before slicing to remove any grit and dry them with paper towels.

tomatoes

Grilled Bread Salad with Tomatoes & Spicy Greens

Serves six.

- 3 Tbs. dry vermouth
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- Kosher salt
- 1 lb. juicy, ripe tomatoes (about 3 medium), cored and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 scallions (white and green parts), thinly sliced on the diagonal
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil; more for the bread
- 2 cups spicy greens, such as arugula, mizuna, or baby mustard greens, well washed and dried
- 10 to 12 oz. day-old crusty country bread (not sourdough)
- 1 clove garlic, cut in half crosswise
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, torn
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ cup pine nuts, lightly toasted

In a medium bowl, stir the vermouth, lemon zest, coriander, and ½ tsp. kosher salt. Add the tomatoes and scallions. Stir in the olive oil and set aside for up to an hour.

Prepare a charcoal grill so it's medium hot or heat a gas grill to medium high.

Remove any tough stems from the greens and cut large leaves into 2-inch pieces.

Cut the crust off the loaf of bread; don't worry about removing all of it, just the heaviest, chewiest parts. Cut the loaf lengthwise into ¾-inch slices. Brush the slices lightly with olive oil and grill them around the perimeter of the fire (you can be grilling other foods in the center) until uniformly golden, about 4 minutes per side. Avoid charring the edges. Remove the bread and rub all sides with the cut face of the garlic.

To assemble the salad, tear or chop the bread into ¾-inch pieces and put them in a large salad bowl. Add the basil and greens and then the seasoned tomato-scallion mixture. Toss gently with a large spoon to combine. Season with salt and a few generous grinds of black pepper. Add the pine nuts, toss, and serve.

—Molly Stevens,
Fine Cooking #58



Grilled Tomatoes

Serves six.

- 6 medium-size firm tomatoes (about 2¼ lb. total)
- Kosher salt
- 1½ Tbs. red-wine vinegar
- 3½ Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 small shallot, minced
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley; more whole leaves for garnish

Remove the green stem from the tomatoes but don't core them or cut into the tomato at all. Cut each tomato in half horizontally. Gently loosen the seeds with your fingertips. Turn the tomato over and shake to discard any loose seeds. Sprinkle the cut side of the tomatoes well with salt. Set them cut side down on a wire rack and let them drain for 30 minutes.

Prepare a charcoal grill so it's medium hot or heat a gas grill to high.

In a bowl, whisk the vinegar with 3 Tbs. of the olive oil, the garlic, and the shallot. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Lightly oil the drained tomatoes with the remaining ½ Tbs. olive oil. Arrange them cut side down on the hot grate and grill (turning halfway through) until the skins begin to blister and soften, 6 to 10 minutes.

Just before serving, add the chopped parsley to the vinaigrette. Transfer the tomatoes from the grill to a platter and drizzle with the vinaigrette. Garnish with the parsley leaves and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

—Joanne Weir,
Fine Cooking #46



Tomato Salad with Feta, Olives & Mint

Serves six.

- 6 oz. feta
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint, plus sprigs for garnish
- 4 large ripe tomatoes, cut into ¼-inch slices
- Kosher salt
- ½ lb. cucumber, peeled, seeded, and cut into small dice
- ½ lb. bite-size tomatoes (cherry, pear, or grape) in assorted colors, halved
- ½ cup Niçoise or Kalamata olives (about 15), pitted and halved
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 4 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- Freshly ground black pepper

Crumble the feta into a small bowl. Add the chopped mint and toss; set aside.

Season the tomato slices with salt and then arrange them, overlapping slightly, on a serving platter. Sprinkle the cucumber over the tomato slices. Season the bite-size tomatoes with salt and scatter them over the cucumber. Sprinkle the olives on top.

In a small bowl, whisk the olive oil with the lemon zest, and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Drizzle the dressing over the salad. Scatter the feta over the salad, garnish with the mint sprigs, and serve immediately.

—Joanne Weir,
Fine Cooking #59

tomato tips:

When choosing tomatoes, don't hesitate to smell them; if there's no tomato fragrance, there will be little tomato flavor.

Ripe, flavorful tomatoes can be simply sliced and served as a side to steak; drizzle them with a little olive oil and sprinkle on some sea salt.

France Ruffenach



Mark Thomas

Barley & Black-Eyed Pea Salad

Serves six to eight.

FOR THE VINAIGRETTE:

- ¼ cup fresh lime or lemon juice
- ½ tsp. finely grated lime or lemon zest
- ¼ tsp. finely chopped garlic
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- ¼ tsp. honey
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE SALAD:

- ½ cup pearled barley (be sure it's pearled or it won't soften)
- 1½ cups rich vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 cup frozen or canned black-eyed peas
- 1 large yellow bell pepper, roasted, peeled, and diced
- 1 cup seeded and diced ripe tomato
- ¾ to 1 cup diagonally sliced scallions (white and green parts)
- 1 cup cooked fresh (or thawed, frozen) corn kernels

Green- and red-leaf lettuce leaves (optional)

Make the vinaigrette: In a small bowl, whisk the citrus juice, zest, garlic, cumin, cilantro, oil, and honey; add salt and pepper to taste.

Make the salad: In a dry saucepan, lightly toast the barley over moderate heat until fragrant, about 5 minutes, stirring to prevent burning. Add the stock, bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover, and simmer gently until the liquid is absorbed and the barley is tender, about 40 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand, partially uncovered, until cooled to room temperature before stirring.

Meanwhile, cook the frozen black-eyed peas in lightly salted boiling water until just tender but not mushy, about 15 minutes. Drain, cool, and set aside. (If using canned peas, don't cook them, just rinse them well.)

In a large (preferably glass) bowl, layer the barley, peas, roasted pepper, tomato, scallions, and corn. Drizzle the vinaigrette over the salad and toss before serving. Arrange the greens (if using) on plates and top with the salad.

—John Ash, *Fine Cooking* #28



Shells with Arugula, Feta & Sun-Dried Tomatoes

Serves eight to ten.

Kosher salt

- ¼ lb. arugula, washed (stem and rip the leaves into smaller pieces if they're large)
- 6 oz. feta, crumbled
- ½ cup pitted Kalamata olives (16 to 20), quartered
- 2 heaping Tbs. drained, thinly sliced oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes
- 1 lb. dried small or medium shells or orecchiette
- 1 Tbs. red-wine vinegar
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 10 fresh basil leaves, cut in a chiffonade

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil. Put the arugula, feta, olives, and sun-dried tomatoes in a large bowl. Reserve or refrigerate until needed.

Cook the pasta in the boiling water until it's just tender. Meanwhile, add the vinegar and oil to the arugula salad, season liberally with salt and pepper, and toss well. Drain the pasta, add it to the salad, and toss. Check the seasonings and serve hot, warm, or at room temperature.

—Tony Rosenfeld,
Fine Cooking #51

grain & pasta tip:

If chilling a pasta or grain salad, let it warm up at room temperature before serving as the cold will dull flavors; taste and season if needed.

Summer Wheatberry Salad

Serves six.

- 1 cup soft wheatberries
- 6 cups water (or vegetable or chicken broth) with ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ cup chopped artichoke hearts
- ½ cup quartered cherry tomatoes
- ¼ cup diced roasted red bell pepper
- 2 Tbs. capers, drained and chopped
- 3 Tbs. sliced scallion (white and green parts)
- ¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh basil or cilantro
- ½ to 1 tsp. finely minced garlic
- 2 Tbs. fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbs. white-wine vinegar
- ¼ cup fruity olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Young greens, such as arugula, red mustard, cress, mizuna, or a mix



Mark Thomas

In a heavy saucepan with a lid, combine the wheatberries, water or broth, salt, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil and then simmer, partially covered, until the wheatberries are pleasantly chewy, which may take anywhere from 50 to 90 minutes. Take the pan off the heat, discard the bay leaf, and let the berries cool in the liquid. When cool, drain off all the liquid and put the berries into a large mixing bowl. Add the artichoke hearts, tomatoes, roasted pepper, capers, scallion, almonds, and basil or cilantro.

In a small bowl, whisk the garlic, lime juice, vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper; toss with the salad. Arrange the greens on chilled plates and top with the salad.

—John Ash, *Fine Cooking* #28

BY TASHA DESERIO

Fresh vegetables & herbs

are perfect for quick and delicious summer meals. I find that the farmers' market is always the best source for mounds of fresh corn, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, and herbs, but your local supermarket should offer a nice selection as well. When shopping for fresh corn, avoid any that has been trimmed or shucked, which is a supermarket trick for getting rid of lackluster corn. Also, be especially vigilant about finding ripe, fragrant tomatoes—they should feel slightly warm (or room temperature) in the palm of your hand and offer just a slight resistance when squeezed.

For another great Quick & Delicious recipe, check out the back cover.



Seared Rib-Eye Steaks with Edamame & Garlic

Serves two.

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
10 large cloves garlic, peeled and halved lengthwise
Kosher salt
2 1-inch-thick, boneless rib-eye steaks (6 to 8 oz. each)
Coarsely cracked black pepper
2 cups frozen shelled edamame
Pinch cayenne; more to taste
1 Tbs. finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)
Lemon wedges, for serving

In a 1-quart saucepan over medium heat, warm the oil with the garlic and a pinch of salt. When the oil starts to bubble gently, reduce the heat to maintain a steady simmer. Cook the garlic, stirring occasionally, until it is light golden brown and perfectly tender when pierced with a fork, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, bring a medium pot of water (about 5 cups) to a boil over high heat.

Generously season the steaks on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat until hot. Add 2 Tbs. of the garlic oil and the steaks. Don't disturb the steaks until they have a nice brown crust, about 3 minutes. Turn and cook the other side until the steaks are done to your lik-

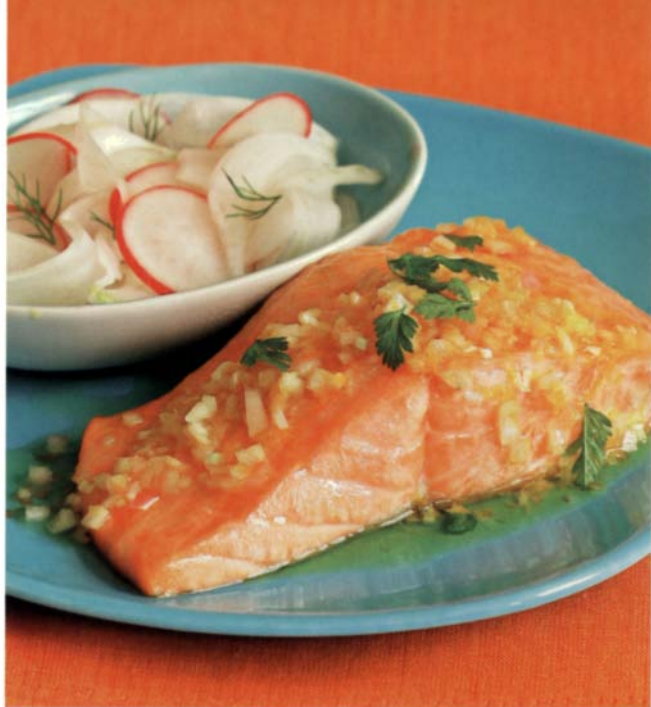
ing, about 3 minutes more for medium rare. Transfer the steaks to a plate and let them rest for about 5 minutes.

While the steaks rest, add 1 tsp. kosher salt and the edamame to the boiling water. Return to a boil and cook, uncovered, until the edamame are tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain and transfer to a medium bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of the garlic oil, the cayenne, and the parsley, if using. Toss to combine. Taste and add salt if necessary.

Holding your knife at an angle, cut the steaks into 1/2-inch-thick slices and transfer to dinner plates. Remove the garlic from the remaining oil and scatter it over the beef. Serve with the edamame and the lemon wedges on the side.

Serving suggestion:

Look for frozen edamame, or soybeans, in the frozen foods section of the supermarket, or blanched edamame in the produce section. (For more on edamame, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 72). If you can't find them, try tossing drained, canned cannellini beans with the garlic oil instead.



Baked Salmon with Citrus Vinaigrette

Serves four.

1 medium shallot, finely diced
1½ Tbs. Champagne vinegar
or white-wine vinegar
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tsp. fresh orange juice
½ Tbs. finely chopped
lemon zest
½ Tbs. finely chopped
orange zest
Kosher salt
4 5-oz. skinless, center-cut
salmon fillets
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil;
more for the salmon
Fresh chervil leaves or 1 Tbs.
roughly chopped fresh
cilantro, for garnish

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F.

In a small bowl, combine the shallot, vinegar, lemon juice, orange juice, lemon zest, orange zest, and a pinch of salt. Let the mixture sit for 5 to 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, season the salmon with salt, put it on an oiled rimmed baking sheet, and drizzle a thin stream of oil on top. Bake until it's done to your liking, about 6 minutes for medium, 8 minutes for medium well, keeping in mind

that it will continue to cook after it comes out of the oven.

Whisk the ¼ cup oil into the shallot mixture, taste, and adjust the seasoning with a drop of vinegar if necessary. Transfer the salmon to four dinner plates, spoon about 2 Tbs. of the vinaigrette onto each portion, sprinkle the chervil leaves or cilantro on top, and serve.

Serving suggestion:

This salmon goes beautifully with a simple salad of shaved fennel and radishes tossed with fresh lemon juice.



Hot Italian Sausage with Fresh-Corn Polenta

Serves six.

Kosher salt
2 cups yellow stone-ground
cornmeal
3 cups fresh corn kernels
(cut from 4 large or 6 small
ears of corn)
4 Tbs. unsalted butter
½ cup freshly grated
Parmigiano Reggiano;
more for shaving
12 links fresh hot Italian
sausage
1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
1 to 2 Tbs. roughly chopped
fresh flat-leaf parsley

Bring 7 cups of water to a boil in a large (4-qt.), heavy-based saucepan over high heat. Add 1 Tbs. kosher salt and whisk in the cornmeal in a fine stream. Continue to whisk until the polenta begins to thicken, 1 to 3 minutes. Turn the heat to medium low, and cook, uncovered, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon. (If the polenta becomes too thick to stir, add hot water, a little at a time, until the polenta is soft but will still hold its shape.) After about 20 minutes (the polenta should be about three-quarters done), stir in the corn and continue to cook

until the corn is tender and the polenta is tender and no longer gritty, 10 to 13 minutes more. Stir in the butter and grated Parmigiano. Taste the polenta and add more salt if necessary.

Meanwhile, using a small, sharp knife, pierce each sausage in 3 or 4 places. Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat until hot. Add the sausages and cook, turning occasionally, until they are cooked through and golden brown on all sides, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board, cut them in half on the diagonal, and keep warm.

Spoon the polenta onto dinner plates and arrange the sausages on the polenta. Using a vegetable peeler, shave a few curls of Parmigiano on top, and sprinkle with the parsley.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with sautéed red peppers and slivered garlic, finished with a few drops of balsamic vinegar.



Arugula Salad with Shrimp, Corn, Cherry Tomatoes & Red Chile

Serves four.

- 2 Tbs. red-wine vinegar**
- 1 small clove garlic, pounded to a paste with a pinch of salt**
- 1 large shallot, halved and thinly sliced lengthwise**
- 2 cups fresh corn kernels (about 3 ears corn)**
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- ¾ lb. large shrimp (about 12), peeled, deveined, and halved lengthwise**
- Kosher salt**
- ¾ lb. cherry tomatoes, cut in half (2 heaping cups)**
- 1 medium fresh red chile (such as Fresno), seeded and finely diced**
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh marjoram or oregano**
- ½ lb. arugula (about 8 lightly packed cups), washed and spun dry**

Put the vinegar and garlic in a small bowl. Put the shallot in another small bowl and fill with ice water. Let sit for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, bring a small pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add the corn kernels and cook for about 30 seconds. Drain and set aside.

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a 10-inch sauté pan over high heat until hot. Add the shrimp and season with salt. Cook, tossing frequently, until the

shrimp turn pink and light golden brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside to cool briefly.

Whisk the remaining ½ cup oil into the vinegar mixture. Drain the shallot. Put the shallot, corn, tomatoes, chile, and marjoram in a large bowl, season with salt, and toss with about 3 Tbs. of the vinaigrette.

Put the arugula in a separate bowl, season with salt, and toss with just enough vinaigrette to lightly coat the greens, about 3 Tbs.

Taste the corn mixture and the arugula and add salt if necessary. Toss any remaining vinaigrette with the shrimp. Transfer the arugula to a large platter or four plates and distribute the corn mixture on top of and around the arugula, making sure that the mixture doesn't weigh down the greens. Tuck the shrimp in and around the salad and serve immediately.

Serving suggestion:

To make this dish more filling, serve an avocado toast on the side: Rub warm toast with a clove of garlic, spread coarsely mashed avocado on top, season with salt, and drizzle with olive oil.



Pancetta, Tomato & Avocado Sandwich with Aioli

Serves four.

- 3 small or 2 medium cloves garlic**
- Kosher salt**
- 2 large egg yolks**
- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil, preferably a mild one**
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice; more as needed**
- 12 thin slices pancetta**
- 8 ½-inch-thick slices rustic, country-style bread, toasted**
- 1 large ripe avocado**
- 2 small or medium tomatoes, cut into ¼-inch-thick slices**
- 1 cup arugula, washed and spun dry**

Using a mortar and pestle or the flat side of a chef's knife, mash the garlic to a paste with a pinch of salt. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg yolks and half of the mashed garlic. Whisk in the oil a few drops at a time. As the mixture begins to emulsify, add the oil in a slow stream. When the aioli becomes too thick to whisk (after you've added about half the oil), whisk in 1 tsp. of the lemon juice to loosen it. Continue to whisk in the oil in a thin stream. If the aioli thickens too much before you finish adding the oil, loosen it with a drop of water. Taste and adjust the seasoning with salt and the remaining garlic.

If the aioli tastes a little flat, add a little more lemon juice. The aioli should be thick and spreadable, like mayonnaise, so don't thin it too much.

Position a rack 6 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high. Arrange the pancetta in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet and broil, flipping as necessary, until it's golden brown and crisp, about 8 minutes total.

Meanwhile, spread the aioli on the toasted bread. Peel and slice the avocado; arrange a few slices on each of four slices of toast, pressing the avocado onto the bread. Season with a pinch of salt. Lay a few slices of tomato on top of the avocado and season again with a pinch of salt. Put three pieces of pancetta on each sandwich and top each with a small handful of arugula. Top with the remaining slices of toast, cut the sandwiches in half, if you like, and serve immediately.

Tips: You can use pasteurized eggs for the aioli, if you like. Also, if you're slicing the pancetta by hand, freezing it briefly first will firm it and make it easier to slice.



Grilled Chicken Breasts with Green-Olive Relish

Serves four.

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
About ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
½ lb. whole green olives (about 1½ cups), such as Lucques or Picholine, rinsed, pitted, and coarsely chopped
¼ cup blanched almonds, lightly toasted and roughly chopped
2 Tbs. capers, rinsed and coarsely chopped
2 Tbs. roughly chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest
1½ tsp. chopped fresh thyme
1 small clove garlic, pounded to a paste with a pinch of salt

Prepare a hot grill fire.

Put one chicken breast on one side of a large piece of plastic wrap. Drizzle about 1 tsp. oil on the breast and loosely fold half of the plastic wrap over the chicken. (There should be enough room to allow the chicken to expand when you pound it.) Using a meat mallet or a heavy sauté pan, pound the chicken so that it's about ½ inch thick. Discard the plastic wrap and repeat the process with the

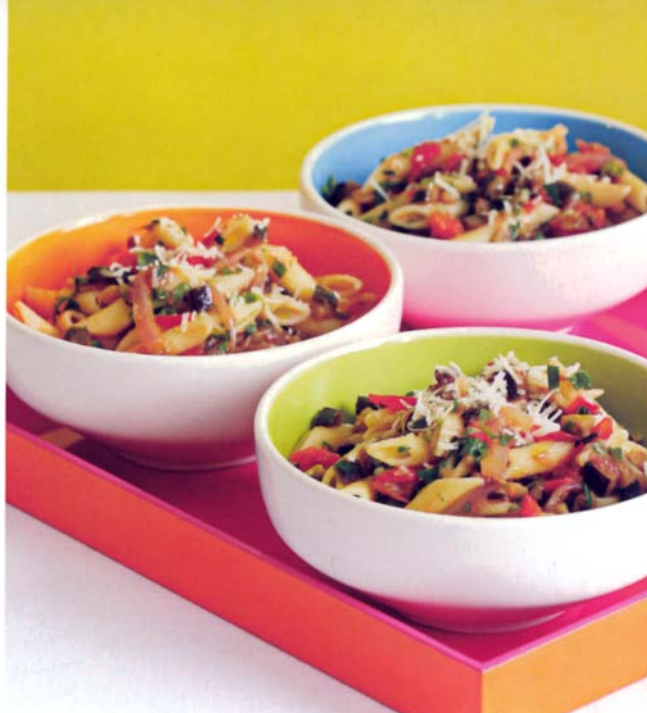
remaining breasts. Season the chicken with salt and pepper on both sides, and coat with 2 Tbs. of the oil. Let sit at room temperature while you prepare the other ingredients.

In a medium bowl, combine the olives, almonds, capers, parsley, lemon zest, thyme, garlic, and ½ cup of the oil.

Lay the chicken on the grill and cook, undisturbed, until it has grill marks, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the chicken and continue to grill until it's cooked through, about 2 to 3 minutes more. Transfer to a clean cutting board. Let rest for 2 to 3 minutes. Holding your knife at an angle, cut the chicken into ½-inch-thick slices and arrange them on a platter or on four dinner plates. Spoon the relish on top or to the side of the chicken and serve immediately.

Serving suggestion:

Serve with boiled new potatoes tossed with olive oil and parsley, or for something lighter, an escarole salad with chunky garlic croutons.



Penne with Eggplant, Tomato & Basil

Serves four.

¼ cup plus 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more for drizzling
1 medium eggplant (1 lb.), cut into ¼-inch dice (about 6 cups)
Kosher salt
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes; more to taste
1¼ lb. tomatoes, seeded and cut into ½-inch chunks (about 2⅓ cups)
3 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 cup roughly chopped fresh basil
¾ lb. dried penne rigate
½ cup coarsely grated Parmigiano Reggiano or ricotta salata

Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil.

Heat ¼ cup of the oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat until shimmering hot. Add the eggplant and a generous pinch of salt. Reduce the heat to medium high and cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggplant is tender and light golden brown, about 6 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Reduce the heat to medium, return the pan to the

stove, and add the remaining 2 Tbs. oil, the onion, red pepper flakes, and a pinch of salt. Cook until the onion is tender and golden brown, about 6 minutes. Add the tomatoes and another pinch of salt, and cook until the tomatoes start to break down and form a sauce, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Return the eggplant to the pan, add the basil, and cook for 1 minute more to let the flavors meld. Taste the sauce and add salt if needed.

Cook the pasta in the boiling water until al dente. Reserve a small amount of the cooking water and drain the pasta. Put the pasta in a large bowl and toss with the eggplant mixture. If the pasta needs a little more moisture, add a splash of the pasta water. Taste and add salt if needed. Put the pasta on a platter or divide among shallow bowls and finish with a drizzle of oil. Sprinkle the Parmigiano or ricotta salata on top and serve immediately.

Tasha DeSerio, cofounder of Olive Green Catering in Berkeley, California, cooked at Chez Panisse for five years. ♦